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LONDON

A SHORT HISTORY

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LONDON

A SHORT HISTORY

LONDON

A SHORT HISTORY

WITH MAPS AND
ILLUSTRATIONS, BY

M. J. C. MEIKLEJOHN, B.A.

SOMETIME
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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD REAY, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

CHAIRMAN OF THE

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD

'You must remember that London is not merely the capital of England, Scotland, and Ireland; it is the capital of the British Empire.'

LORD ROSEBERY,
Feb. 1898.

'The streets, wherever one turns, whisper a thousand things of the past: the churches contain the ashes of those great men who fought in the long struggle for liberty at home, and carried the flag of enterprise abroad; the companies tell of trade regulated for the good of the craftsman; the Lord Mayor himself, with his mediæval array and his mediæval officers, is to me a Historic Monument which ought never to be removed.'

SIR WALTER BESANT,
Feb. 1898.

PREFACE

GEORGE I. was a German, and 'knew not his chief city.' He had small chance of doing so, for he preferred to spend most of his time in Germany, and in London he lived very little.

At the present day some six millions of people spend their lives in London. How many of these know anything of their town? With the thirty thousand streets of London, no man—not even a cabman, or a mounted police-inspector—can become acquainted; of the ten great cities that are contained in London, one can only get to know at first-hand about two or three; and the vastness of the idea conveyed by the words 'Greater London' almost appals the intelligence. But the history of the 'Town'—and London contains more of the history of England than any other English city—may, and ought to, be learned by her children, great and small. Yet how many of London's older children, taken at random, are conscious of the important geographical and historical facts that lie hidden in the names of Fleet Street, Ludgate Hill, Cheapside, or Tooley Street? And how many of London's school-children know how London first became a city, or have any idea of the steps by which she reached her present astonishing position ?

To teach some part of that lesson is the aim of this short book. It does not profess to give any account of modern London, or deal with the million phases of modern London life. If the book conveys to the learner some idea of London's great historical past, the writer's end has been achieved. The writer has to express his very great obligations to the books of Mr. W. J. Loftie and Sir Walter Besant on London and Westminster, and to thank Mr. Edward Stanford for permission to use the map of 'London before the Houses.'

M. J. C. MEIKLEJOHN.

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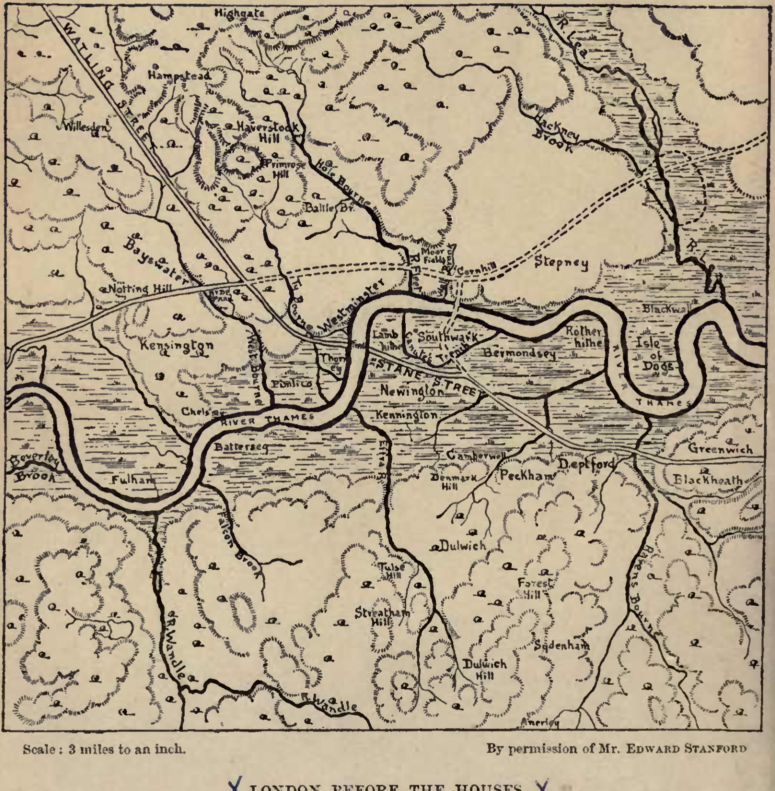
LONDON
A SHORT HISTORY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Westminster
Blackwall
Kensington
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Southwark
Rother hithe
Isle of Dogs
Thorney
Bermondsey
Stane Street
Westbourne
Pimlico
Newington
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Chelsea
Kennington
Battersea
Effra R.
Camberwell
Deptford
Greenwich
Blackheath
Beverley Brook
Fulham
Denmark Hill
Peckham
Falcon Brook
Dulwich
Tulse Hill
Forest Hill
Streatham Hill
R. Wandle
Sydenham
Ravens Bourne
Dulwich Hill
R. Wandle
Anerley

Scale: 3 miles to an inch.

By permission of Mr. EDWARD STANFORD

LONDON BEFORE THE HOUSES

LONDON

CHAPTER I

THE SITE OF LONDON

1st sentence

1. It is not easy for us at the present day to form any idea of what the ground on which London stands must have looked like, before it was covered with houses. In this huge world—this enormous wilderness—of buildings, very few open spaces are left which enable us to gain a notion of the geographical features of the site of London. Hills have been pared down, marshes have been drained, rivers have disappeared or have lost themselves in a labyrinth of sewers, valleys have been filled up; so that the true geography of London, apart from the topography of the streets, is to most of us a sealed or an unintelligible book. Even yet, however, there survive some natural features, which enlighten us as to the general lie of the land; and we have other important sources of information in the different place-names that have remained in London, ever since London became an historical town.

2. The importance of these old street-names is very great; they tell their story, where history or tradition is dumb, where documents speak falsely, and where even geographical features are utterly obscured. Over and over again it will be found that a long-used (and sometimes a disused) name of a street, or a square, or a wharf, will furnish us with

information that it would be very difficult, perhaps even impossible, to glean from any other quarter. Thus **Sea-coal Lane** and **Ship Court**, near Fleet Street, point to a time when a small river (the Fleet) crossed Ludgate Circus, and inform us that coal-laden barges were able to come up the little stream. The name of **Chelsea** (*Chesil ea*, or shingle island) sheds a striking light on the geography of that part of London. **Southwark**, 'the bulwark on the South,' took its name from the existence there of an old Saxon fortification made to defend the southern approach to London Bridge. **Clapham Rise** marks a point where the flat land south of the Thames begins to rise towards the Surrey Hills. The **Isle of Dogs**, once a low marshy island, is so no longer, but a busy area covered with docks. But more important than all names is that of **London** itself; and, when we know the derivation of that word, we have learnt an important fact both about the history and the geography of the town. The name **London**, then, is a corruption of *Llyn-din*, and means the Fort on the Lake. Why it should have been so called, and who called it so, will presently be made clear.

3. Meantime, before the question of the geography of London is discussed, it will be well to ascertain what the term London really means. How far does it extend? What does it include? To these questions there can be no proper answer. Who knows how far London stretches? Who can say where London ends and the country begins? Every hour it is growing, and every year a town as big as Brighton is added to its mass. Greater London has a population of over six millions, and could therefore contain more than twice the people in Paris, and is equal to four Chicagos And yet

this Greater London is growing every day; its streets run far into Essex, and it has spread its suburbs even into Hertfordshire. In 1851 (the year of the great Exhibition inaugurated by Prince Albert, the husband of the Queen) the Crystal Palace was erected in Hyde Park. At that time a few scattered villas lay between it and Brompton; and when the Palace was removed to the top of Sydenham Hill, it came to a neighbourhood that was planted with but a few farms or country-houses. But now the statue of Prince Albert, which stands on the spot where once stood the Crystal Palace, looks out from Hyde Park to Sydenham Hill over an uninterrupted sea of houses—uninterrupted save only by the Thames itself. And London is growing still.

4. In this preliminary chapter on the site of London it is necessary to fix some definite boundaries. For this purpose it may be convenient to confine the term London to what is known as the **County of London**, which lies, north of the river, in Middlesex, and, south of it, in Kent and Surrey. This district is contained in an area of 121 square miles, and it is bounded by Hampstead and Highgate on the north, by Woolwich on the east, by Sydenham and Anerley on the south, and on the west by Hammersmith and Putney. In the area thus restricted, a glance at the map will show us what are the main geographical features. These are briefly: irregular clusters of low, and once thickly wooded, hills on the north and south of the winding Thames; a huge lake or swampy lagoon, through which the river flows, broadest on the south; and on the east another large marsh, through which the River Lea flowed into the Thames. The great river was also fed by numerous small tributary streams from both sides. Most of these are now gone; they have been

degraded to mere drains and now find their way into the Thames in the character of sewers. Some, like the Beverley Brook (the *lea* or forest where the beavers once built their dams), the Wandle, and the Ravensbourne, have still an existence (though a very dirty one) as rivers. But these lie all on the south side of the Thames; the brooks and streams that poured down from the Middlesex Forest of the north are known as rivers no more.

5. **The Thames at London.**—The Thames itself had by no means a defined course. The river flowed, or rather wound its way through swampy creeks, and past low mud eyots (aits, or islands) from Chelsea to Blackwall; and twice a day the tide came up and made the whole area between these two places look like one vast lake. In this lake or submerged swamp there appeared above the surface of the water many small islands. Keep a look-out for the termination **ea** or **ey**; and wherever it occurs you may be quite certain that there was an island in the swamp. There were islands at **Chelsea**, at **Battersea** (St. Peter's island), at the old island of **Thorney**, or Isle of Thorns (where Westminster Abbey now stands), and at **Bermondsey**. Little by little the 'Londoners'—the inhabitants of this malarial swamp—reclaimed small bits of land by raising embankments against the river and the tides; little by little the river itself added to these reclaimed spots by bringing down upon them contributions of sand and mud in the flood-time. Little by little the Thames was forced into a definite course by the 'Albert Embankments' of the day, till it has confined itself to the channel in which we at present know it. Now it turns to the northward as it passes Westminster; from Westminster it flows nearly due east towards Rotherhithe (the 'rower's hithe,' or landing-

place); then the river turns south, and bends to the north again to Blackwall. In this last bend lies the Isle of Dogs, which was at one time seven feet below high-water mark. This is by no means the only spot in London which is, or was, below the level of the water. In South London, where the marsh was widest, there are many streets and districts on a level with, or below the waters of, the Thames. In Bermondsey the cellars in some streets were, till a short time ago, often flooded at high-tide; and in the last century marshes still existed at Lambeth,[1] and wild-fowl were shot on the once swampy heath of Westminster.

6. **The Hills and Rivers of London.**—As has been said already, there stood on either side of the Thames two ranges or irregular groups of low hills, from which many small streams found their way through shallow valleys to the great river. The range to the south need not detain us long. It rises to its highest elevation at Sydenham Hill (400 ft.), and then drops very suddenly, with one interruption at Herne Hill, to the flats of Camberwell, Newington, and Lambeth. Other considerable heights are Dulwich Hill (367 ft.) and Streatham Hill (258 ft.), across which, as the name implies, ran a great Roman road, or 'streat.' The principal rivers of the south side are, or were, the Wandle, the Effra (there is a road in Brixton named after this river), and the Ravensbourne. West and east from Battersea to Greenwich, and north and south from Camberwell to Southwark, stretched the great Thames Marsh.

7. On the north side of the river the range of hills may be divided into two—a southern and a northern group. The **southern group** is lower than the northern, and runs from Notting Hill (where once upon a time the London children

---

[1] Lambeth is a corruption of 'loam-hithe' (=muddy landing-place).

went a-nutting) on the west, to Cornhill, and further on to the Lea marshes, on the east. This range decreases in elevation from west to east; and from the River Fleet to the east of the Walbrook it was nothing more than a clay cliff some thirty feet high, which closely skirted the river bank. The **northern group** slopes up very steeply from the foot of Primrose Hill to the once forest-covered elevations of Hampstead and Highgate. The space between the northern and southern groups of hills was a dreary stretch of fen (indeed the swamp of Moorfields almost deserved to be called a lake); and the fen was merged to the north in the Middlesex Forest. Fragments of this forest are still found at Hainault, Hampstead, Highgate, and Epping; and at Epping Forest there yet remains a small herd of fallow deer, the ancestors of which furnished the ancient Londoner with food, clothing, bone-implements, and sinews for stitching his garments.

8. **The Rivers of the North.**—The most important streams, which ran down from the northern hills to the Thames, are the **Westbourne** (*bourne*, *born*, or *burn*=river), the **Tyburn,** the **Holbourne** or **Fleet,** which flowed down Farringdon Road and Street, and the **Walbrook.** None of these streams have now any existence aboveground; they flow, if they flow at all, as sewers; but their courses can still be traced by the names of places that once stood upon their banks.

(i) The **Westbourne** rose on the slopes of Hampstead, and after it had crossed the site of Edgware Road spread out into a shallow Bay-water (hence Bayswater Road), where the cattle drank. When Hyde Park was made, this stream was dammed up to form the **Serpentine**; and it now leaves the park, underground, at Albert Gate, crosses the Kensington Road at Knights*bridge*, and falls into the Thames through what is known as the Ranelagh Sewer.

(ii) The **Tyburn** also rises in Hampstead, not far from the Swiss Cottage. It ran south past the Church of St. Mary-le-bourne (St. Mary on the burn), or **Marylebone**, flowed across Brook Street, and down Engine Street, now called Brick Street (where there was once probably a water-wheel on the brook), to the depression of Piccadilly. The ornamental water in front of Buckingham Palace marks the site of a marsh in which the Tyburn stagnated before it meandered through the broad swamps of Pimlico to the Thames. The hollow in Green Park is in fact part of the valley of the Tyburn; and its course across the park can yet be traced, in cool evenings, by a line of mist which follows its underground windings. One of its branches now falls into the Thames under the name of the King's Scholars' Pond Sewer. In its three-branched delta lay Thorney, or the Isle of Thorns, in the thickets of which the wild deer hid themselves; here Westminster and its Abbey stand now. The Tyburn gave its name to the place of execution for the city of London at the foot of Edgware Road; it was the 'bourne from whence no traveller returns.'

(iii) The most important of all the London streams was the **Holbourne** (=the burn in the hollow), which was called in the lower part of its course the **Fleet.** This river rose in the highest ground of north London at Highgate. It made its way through a thickly wooded country, till it reached King's Cross, from which point it became navigable. There it plunged into a somewhat deep valley with high clay hills on either side, and was hence called the Holbourne, or the bourne that runs through a hollow. After the stream had passed under Holborn Viaduct, it became tidal and was called the Fleet, the general direction of which is now followed by Farringdon Street. To a bridge which was made over the little river, Fleet Street led on one side of the stream, while up the other bank ran Fleetgate, or Floodgate, or Ludgate Hill. The Fleet remained for many years the western boundary of London; and, affording as it did a spacious harbour where it debouched into the Thames at Blackfriars, and a water-way for some distance into the land, it was of considerable value for trading purposes to the growing town. Even up to the time of Edward I. there is a record of the Fleet being navigable.

(iv) The last river of London that deserves a mention is the **Walbrook**,[1] which took its rise in the fens beyond Moorgate. The street named after it now runs along its old course. The little river itself flowed into the Thames at Dowgate, and there was a small harbour at the junction of the two streams. On either side of the Walbrook stood two low hills, some forty feet in height; and it was the more westerly of the two that formed the site of the first London.

[1] The Saxons, on their coming to London, gave the Walbrook its name. It was to them the 'brook of the Wealhas,' the Welshmen or foreigners.

CHAPTER II

EARLY LONDON AND ROMAN LONDON

1. **The Lake-fort.**—Having got some idea of the lie of the ground round and about London, we must now consider the town or settlement itself—where it was, who were the people that lived in it, and what sort of a life they led. In looking at the earliest—one might almost say the prehistoric—history of London, the most important geographical features to keep fixed in the mind are the two low hills on either side of the Walbrook, the swamp of Moorfields and the Middlesex Forest to the north of the marsh, and the lagoon-like expanse of the Thames to the south. It was on the westernmost of these two small hills that the first London was built. The settlement was indeed a London—a lake-fort: it lay in an extremely strong position between the two streams of the Fleet and the Walbrook; the wide bosom of the Thames spread out on the south; and on the north stretched the fen-land, more or less covered with water, and beyond that the great Middlesex Forest. This lake-fort was therefore practically on an island, and capable of resisting any attack which the ill-armed dwellers in the forest could make on it. Along the southern face, where the marshes ran up from the river, stretched a cliff or steep bank of clay, which the ancient inhabitants made steeper by entrenching, and crowned pro-

bably with a stockade. The men who lived in this fort were **Britons**—men with whom are connected the Welsh of to-day, the Gael of the Scottish Highlands, and the Erse-speaking peasant of Ireland. For a livelihood they hunted the deer and the milk-white wild oxen, such as are found to this day in Chillingham Park in Northumberland; they trapped the beaver in the swamps round Beverley (=Beaver Forest) Brook; they paddled about in their coracles,[1] fishing for salmon, trout, barbel, and bream; their flocks grazed on the green slopes of Holborn Hill; and they made raids on the neighbouring tribes of Hampstead and Highgate, securing much booty in the shape of cattle and slaves.

On Hampstead Heath there is still to be seen a barrow, or burying place, containing probably the bones and weapons of certain Londoners that fell in fight with their northern kinsmen.

2. Presently—no man can say when—some adventurous merchants from Gaul (France) pushed up the Thames, threading their way in light-draught shallops through the sandbanks and swampy creeks, and opened a trade with the long-haired and woad-stained[2] Londoners. What they brought would be pretty much what is always brought by traders for barter with savage tribes—trinkets, hatchets and knives, looking-glasses and cheap finery for the women. They took away skins, and slaves—young boys and red-haired girls, pearls which the fishermen found in the fresh-water mussels, and later on, when the resources of the country became more known and more developed, tin and iron. Trade grew and

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[1] A coracle was a boat made of a skin stretched over a framework of wood. The peasants on the western coasts of Ireland still use a similar boat.

[2] Woad was a blue vegetable-dye with which almost all the Britons stained their bodies.

grew, so that when the Romans, the first conquerors of Britain, entered London, it was a flourishing trading town. What the first London looked like no one can tell; we only know generally that most British forts were placed on a hill or in the midst of a forest, and strengthened with a stockade. So you can think of London then as a cluster of rude huts, nestling on the top of a low hill, from which the inhabitants looked out on a dreary fen-land, seamed here and there by a few cattle-paths. It is probable that, however, some of the Gaulish trading-adventurers settled in London themselves, and they might have induced the Britons to build something more elaborate than the wattle-and-daub huts their fathers had been content to live in. As to the size of the place, we can merely surmise that it extended between Walbrook and the bottom of Ludgate Hill—a distance of about nine hundred yards; and its stretch back from the river must have been bounded by the edge of the Moorfields Fen. Perhaps it extended back to where the Moor Gate was afterwards built in London Wall, or nearly to the spot where Moorgate Railway Station stands to-day.

3. **Roman London.**—What length of time elapsed between the foundation of London and the day when the Romans first set eyes on the town no one can tell us. The great Roman general, Cæsar, landed in Britain, which was then counted as part of Gaul, in the year 55 B.C., and again in 54 B.C. But when he landed the town was already well known both to Gaulish and Belgian merchants. It was, however, on the coming of the Romans that the city took the form of the name by which we know it to-day. We have seen that the Britons called their settlement Llyn-din. When the Romans arrived, they were not able to pronounce

the word Llyn, or *Thlun* as the British called it, but pronounced it as best they could—**Londinium**, and hence **London.**

4. Roman London is for us in very truth a buried city: eighteen feet of earth is spread over the whole of it, and not a single Roman name is left for us to hang a story on. Something we can learn about the city from a few scattered passages in Roman history and from the pages of old chroniclers; something more from excavations made in digging the foundations of modern houses; but the rest of our story we must piece together from imagination, and by applying to London the facts which we know to be true about other Roman settlements in Great Britain. The only solid remains of the Romans' settlement are parts of the wall, with which those great architects encircled their city, and London Stone in Cannon Street, which was probably a milestone on one of the great roads. At what date the Romans established London as a fortified colony is impossible to say. The first authentic date in its history is A.D. 61, when a Roman historian tells us that the place was noted for its concourse of merchants, and for its 'sweetness of situation.' This historian must here have been referring to the natural beauty of the Thames valley; for the town, standing as it did in the midst of a malarious marsh, could hardly yet have been considered healthy, or specially sweet of situation.

5. The first Roman settlement was made, unlike the British, on the eastern side of the Walbrook; it lay upon **Cornhill** and stretched east to the site of Mincing Lane.[1] Upon this small area, about fifty acres in extent, the Romans built a strong walled citadel or stationary camp, probably in

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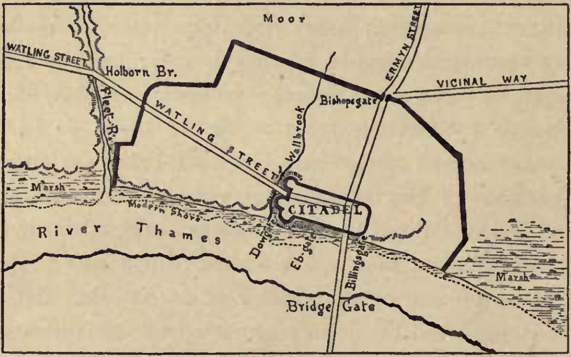
[1] Originally Minchuns' Lane. The Minchuns were a society of nuns.

the year 43 A.D. This they made the heart of their city. Here were the barracks, the arsenal, the courts of justice, the residence of the commander-in-chief, and perhaps the public baths, for the Romans were great bathers, as we can see from the remains of their baths which stand at Bath to this day. Outside the citadel, to the south along the river-bank, the steep clay-cliff was cut down to a slope; embankments were built to keep the river out; and wharves sprung up, along which lay the trading-vessels of the Gaulish merchants. The two chief ports were probably at Billingsgate, which now supplies London with fish, and at Dowgate at the Walbrook mouth. Along the river-bank lived the 'dockers' of the day, and the porters, boat-builders, ship-chandlers, and all the other folk that make up the population of a busy seaport town. But, unlike the present water-side population of London, most of these people were slaves, who were compelled to bring the greater part of their earnings to their Roman or Gaulish masters. The richer sort of people


Moor
WATLING STREET
Holborn Br.
ERMYN STREET
VICINAL WAY
Bishopsgate
Fleet R.
WATLING STREET
Wallbrook
Marsh
Modern Shore
CITADEL
River Thames
Dowgate
Eb-gate
Billingsgate
Marsh
Bridge Gate

ROMAN LONDON

built their villas on the northern and western slopes of the hill on which the citadel stood, partly for the sake of the protection which that fortress would afford, and partly that their houses might be a little raised above the river-mists and the vapours of the stagnant swamp.

6. **Roads** and the **Bridge.**—Almost the first task that the Romans set themselves in the foundation of any of their colonies was the building of roads and bridges. All over England and Scotland are to be seen the remains of the great military roads, running in some cases for miles over hill and dale, wide, straight (so as to guard against the attack of an ambushed enemy at a corner), and very strongly built of causewayed stone and pounded rubble. Of such roads there were three that entered London and met in the citadel. These were **Ermyn Street**[1] (or Poor Men's Street), which ran through Lincoln to York; the **Vicinal Way,** which led to the eastern counties; and a road which the English afterwards called the **Watling** (*i.e.* Waddling) **Street,** which struck through the heart of the country to Wales and Chester (the *castra* or camp of the Roman army of the north), and thence ran to York. This last road also led across the river to Dover.

7. **Watling Street** was the most famous of all the great roads. It ran at first down the streets we now call Edgware Road and Park Lane to Westminster, where the river was crossed by a ferry (the only ford existed much higher up at Brentford). Across the river, the road continued through the marshes by a causeway of stones built on piles, as the name

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[1] Street is one of the few words the Romans left behind in our language. It is a corruption of *strata via,* meaning a paved way; and thus wherever we meet a *street, streat, strat,* or *stret,* we may know that a Roman road passed the place. We find the form in Stratford, Streatham, Chester-le-Street in Durham, and the mountain called High Street in Westmoreland.

Stangate Street (or Stone-paved Street) on the Surrey side of the river still remains to tell us. But we find to-day a Watling Street in the heart of the City running east from St. Paul's Churchyard, and again a Stony Street, also on the Surrey side, in Southwark, not far from London Bridge—another pavemented way through the treacherous fens. This points to the fact that the original course of Watling Street was diverted to the east, and branched off across the Tyburn at Hyde Park Corner. The reason for this alteration was the making of a better crossing of the river by bridge at London itself, instead of by ferry at Westminster. We have no date of the building of the bridge; but we can tell from the different Roman coins fished up from the bed of the river that it must have been made very early in the Roman occupation. 'It probably at first consisted of great beams, founded on piles, and the coins held ready to pay the toll slipped from careless fingers through the gaping boards into the stream below.' Across the river, the piles on which the causeway was built have been discovered all along the road into Kent, until it reached the higher and firmer ground of the hills near Blackheath and Greenwich. The two roads, Ermyn Street and Watling Street, met near the entrance to the bridge; this spot was accordingly made the market-place, and it is called **East Cheap**, or East Market-place, to this day. You will notice that both these roads bear Saxon names. Not a single British or Roman name is to be found in London; the Saxons, on their coming, renamed everything.

We have therefore got to this point in the growth of London: it consisted of a walled fort commanding the bridge, with probably a 'south work' or fort at **Southwark** on the other side; four roads led from it to different parts of England; there were ports at the mouths of the **Fleet** and **Walbrook**, and probably also at **Billingsgate**; while round the walled fort there spread a ring of suburbs as far as Bishopsgate, Newgate, and even Westminster.

8. **Augusta and London Wall.**—The city of London remained in Roman hands for nearly four hundred years. As the place increased in population, and as it probably became the trade-centre for the whole of the southern part of the island, it received the name of **Augusta** in honour of the hereditary title of the Roman Emperors. The old British name was for a time dead, and a city took its place whose name was emblematic of the imperial magnificence of Rome. With the name too came Christianity, and Augusta was a Christian city. Traders came into its forts from many countries, for by this time the oysters, the pearls, the tin, and the furs of Britain had acquired a reputation throughout Europe. The population of the city probably amounted to about 70,000; and many Britons, admitted to the rights of Roman citizenship, had settled there, aping the manners and the dress and the luxury of their Roman masters. 'We may picture them to ourselves,' says Loftie, 'as they assemble in the narrow lanes, aping Roman manners, and wrapping themselves in Roman togas[1] to hide the braccae (breeches) which the climate rendered necessary. We may see the British maidens tripping down the steps by the Walbrook to fill great red jars of Kentish pottery, where now clerks hurry down from Threadneedle Street to Broad Street. . . . We may visit the market-place (at Eastcheap), and may see some

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[1] A toga was a loose flowing robe worn by the Romans, and consisting of a single piece of stuff.

foreign slave-merchant, with cunning, swarthy face, as he haggles over the wretched gang of fair-skinned children from beyond the northern forests.' London was therefore a place of great importance and extensive trade, and a colony, of which the Romans, then the greatest colonising power of the world, might well be proud. But even the power and dread of Rome were not sufficient to overawe the wild tribes that lurked in the forest-fastnesses of the north. No doubt they continued to make cattle-forays upon the unprotected Roman settlements outside the walls of the fort, and might even at times venture to burn and plunder a villa on the outskirts of the town. To stop these incursions the Romans, in the years between 350 and 369, surrounded the whole town with a strong wall; and it was on the building of this wall that the town received the name of **Augusta.**

The wall enclosed a space of about 380 acres, and was 3 miles and 205 yards long; and the space thus enclosed was almost exactly of the same size and shape as Hyde Park. The length of the wall is itself an evidence of the large population of London (which probably numbered, as we have seen, about 70,000 souls); for the Romans never built walls too long for the inhabitants inside to defend.

9. **The Course of the Wall.**—This wall played an important part in the history of London, for it remained the boundary of the City for more than a thousand years. Though but a few fragments of it are now to be seen, its foundation still endures as the Romans built it, and its course has never altered. We can trace out its line exactly, by the help of the names of certain streets in the City, which marked, among other things, the gates or openings made in the Wall. Of course all these names were given long after the Roman occupation, but the track of the Roman wall and

of the later English wall was exactly the same. The Wall, then, ran along the river-bank from Blackfriars to the Tower, and had openings to the Thames at **Billingsgate** and **Dowgate.** From Blackfriars it ran north to cross Watling Street at **Newgate,** and then between Bartholomew's and Christ's Hospitals to a point where **Aldersgate** was afterwards made. Then it turned north for a short distance, and ran east along the street still called **London Wall** to **Bishopsgate,** where two important roads issued from the town. From Bishopsgate it turned south-east and south across **Aldgate** Street (where another gate was made subsequently), and joined the river wall at the spot on which the White Tower now stands. North of Aldgate the wall was protected by an unsavoury ditch two hundred feet broad, where the street of **Houndsditch** runs now. Inside the wall at this point lay some waste ground covered with camomile and wormwood, as the names of two streets (Camomile Street and Wormwood Street) remain to tell us. North of the Aldersgate there was built at a later date, on the site of the present street of the same name, a Barbican, or watch-tower, to protect the gate. The western face of the wall was defended by the Fleet, which came to be known as the Fleet Ditch; and in that part of it another opening was afterwards made, which men called the **Ludgate**, or the gate by the Fleet, Flood, or Lud.

South of Newgate we find the **Old Bailey**, a street-name which is derived from the Latin word *ballium*, denoting an open space in front of a wall. A bailiff meant originally the officer in charge of the ballium—**a bail-reeve,** just as a sheriff is the shire-reeve, or magistrate set over a shire.

10. **Historical References.**—Of actual historical references to London there are very few. In A.D. 61 we hear of the Roman general Suetonius being compelled by the forces of

the British warrior-queen, Boadicea, to evacuate the town. London, which was not then defended by a wall, was captured by the British forces, and all the inhabitants that were not able to leave it, either by reason of their age or sex, were put to the sword. For two centuries after this we have no mention of London by any Roman historian. We only know that the town must have been retaken by the Romans, and that it went on increasing in prosperity. About the year 286, Carausius, the Roman commander in Britain, whose chief duty it was to suppress the German pirates in the Channel, proclaimed himself Emperor, and struck in London gold coins bearing his name and portrait. He made himself popular with the soldiers by enriching them with much booty, but was murdered by Allectus, one of his officers. Allectus in his turn assumed the imperial title, but was defeated and killed at Southwark by a general whom the real Emperor of Rome had despatched against him. The soldiers of Allectus, some of whom had fled across the bridge before the battle, began to plunder and burn the town, but were stopped by the victorious troops of the other side. After these events the history of the town became still more fragmentary. Past the middle of the fourth century the Picts and Scots began to press upon the town from the north. The Roman general, Theodosius, relieved the inhabitants for a time, and their own efforts and the defence of the wall enabled them to stave off the attacks of the fierce hill-men for some years longer. But the end came, or began to come, in the year 410. In that year the Romans formally abandoned England; the Roman soldiers were withdrawn, and the name of Augusta became the name of a dead city.

CHAPTER III

AFTER THE ROMANS. THE COMING OF THE SAXONS

1. The history of the Roman occupation of London is meagre enough. The story of what happened after the Romans left the city is more meagre still. Two dates only can we fix in our mind: in the year 410 the **Romans** abandoned London, and in the year 604 we find the city in possession of the **East Saxons.** Between these two dates there is a silence of two hundred years, broken only in the year 457, when the Britons of Kent were defeated by the Teutonic invaders at **Crayford**, a village eight miles south-east of Greenwich, whence they fled for refuge into the city. We must try as best we can to imagine for ourselves the course of events that filled up this blank of two hundred years. That such a blank should exist at all is one of the marvels of history; for, when a great town falls, the story of the fall generally remains even after the town is in ruins. Of the Saxon conquest of other towns—Pevensey, Bath, Gloucester, and Chester—out of the hands of the Romanised Britons, we have ample enough accounts. But the story of the fall of London, or Augusta, is lost to us; and the conquering Saxons entered into the possession of the greatest city in the south of England without a single memorial of their conquest having been preserved.

2. When we construct for ourselves the story of London after the departure of the Romans, we must keep very clearly before our minds the geographical situation of the town. London lay on what was practically an island, girt in on every side by marsh, fen, hill, and forest. Out of this island four roads led east, west, south and north. Then, as now, the town depended for its food-supplies on outside sources entirely; it had no 'home-farm' within its borders, or even in its immediate neighbourhood. Nearly every pound of food had to be brought to it from a distance: oxen were grazed in the Essex pastures for the London market, and were driven across the Lea at the Old Ford. Corn was floated down the river from the western counties, and along the roads there passed strings of pack-animals, bringing to the Londoner butter, cheese, poultry, pulse, and honey to mix in their mead.[1] By the river, too, from the eastward, the foreign ships brought wine and spices, and such delicacies as had come to be almost necessities to the luxurious population.

3. Then there came a time when these supplies began to be cut off. The **Saxons**, the **Jutes**, and the **Angles** had landed in England, and had made themselves masters of the counties that used to furnish London with its food. This starving-out of London did not befall suddenly—the Saxon conquest was spread over two hundred years—nor did the Britons submit tamely to the invader. They must have made a gallant resistance to these blue-eyed and yellow-haired pirates; and at **Crayford**, in the year 457, they made a determined stand against the Jute conquerors of Kent. In this battle they were defeated and forced across London Bridge into the city—so many more mouths for the hapless

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[1] Mead was a drink compounded of honey and water, yeast, and certain flavourings.

Augusta to fill. Slowly the net drew closer round the doomed city. The Jutes had overrun Kent, and, by occupying the Isle of Thanet at the mouth of the Thames, had shut off London from all intercourse with the sea. The Vicinal Way into the eastern counties was closed by bands of East Saxons and Angles. In the west the West Saxons had put a stop to all supplies coming down by river; while on the north the Picts continued to press hard upon the now all but beleaguered city. The traders from Gaul came no longer to anchor at Billingsgate, for there was no trade to make it worth their while to run the gauntlet of the Jute pirates at the river mouth. There was but one resource open to the Londoners, and that was flight. And there was but one road still open along which they might flee, and that was the Watling street, which led to the west. The road lay through a country which was made desolate and barren by war, but it led the people of London to safety among clansmen of their own race, who still defied the Saxon invaders amidst the fastnesses of the Welsh mountains. We cannot doubt but that this was the route the refugees from London took. Their city they left desolate, or inhabited only by people of low degree, who had nothing to lose, and to whom it did not greatly matter under what masters they lived. Thus did Augusta become deserted. The people who remained behind relapsed into the barbarous ways of life their forbears had practised before the Romans came; the magnificent villas crumbled to ruins; the city gates rotted on their hinges; only the walls remained to keep alive the memory of what had been once the Queen City of the south.

CHAPTER IV

SAXON LONDON

1. The power of Rome over London had vanished, and, save the great wall, had left hardly any relics behind it. The later British inhabitants were gone too, and they left no trace of their occupation, except one name—the name of the little port of **Dowgate**. Even this name, however, though the first half is probably of Celtic origin, has the Saxon ending *gate*, a place through which men may gang, or go. After the Britons had departed, the town must have lain for long deserted, for the Saxon was not a dweller in cities. He lived in what is still called in Scotland a 'town,' and among the Saxons a *tun* or *ton*—that is, a country farm-steading, with a strong enclosure round it. Thence he sent forth his cattle to graze in the neighbouring forests, and at times issued forth himself to make a land-foray on the Britons, or to embark on a piratical venture in his swift galleys. But the time came when the Saxon did learn to live in towns. For, in the year 604, we find the East Saxons in occupation of what they called **Lundenwic**, or London town, for the old name had risen to life again. The Saxons on their coming gave new names to everything—to the old Roman roads, to the gates in the Wall (which the Romans would call *ports*), and even to the hills and rivers, for the names Holebourne, Fleet or Flood, and Walbrook (the brook of the *weal-has* or

foreigners) are all of Saxon, that is of English, origin. Even the courses of several of the streets were changed; and to obliterate the course of an ancient street is a harder task almost than to turn a river out of its channel.

2. **The Saxons in London.** The history of London during most of this period is a religious one. In the year 597 the great Roman missionary **Augustine**, with forty monks, came to **Ethelbert**, king of Kent, who was also overlord of London. He and his court accepted Christianity, and the king decreed that the people of London should do the same, and should put away from them the worship of Thor and Odin,[1] the war-gods of the north. So London became once more a Christian city (for we must remember that it was Christian under the Roman rule), and **Mellitus** was consecrated as its first bishop in 604. Ethelbert built a church which was called **St. Paul's**, and from that day to this a church of the same name has stood on the gently sloping hill which overlooked the Lud-gate. But this conversion of the Londoners, made, as it were, to order, did not last long, and in 616 the people expelled their bishop and sank into heathendom again. For this relapse, so the chronicler tells us, they were punished by a plague and by a crushing defeat at the hands of the men of Wessex. These calamities were regarded as a direct warning from the 'white God' of the Christians, so that in the year 654 London received Cedd as its second bishop, and by the year 693 Christianity was finally and firmly established. It is to this period that we owe the foundation of many churches which bear Saxon names. Such were **St. Ethelburga's**, named after the daughter of King Ethelbert; the church of **St. Osyth**, the name of which survives

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[1] From Thor we get Thursday, and from Odin (or Woden) Wodensday or Wednesday.

in Size Lane (=St. Osyth's Lane); and four churches dedicated to **St. Botolph**, an East Anglian saint who died at Botolphston (or Boston) in Lincolnshire.

3. We cannot believe that the possession of London at this period was a source of strength to the East Saxons. Indeed we know that it could not have been. For the Saxons set little store by the protection afforded by walls, and they therefore allowed the Roman wall to continue crumbling to ruins. Thus the city lay at the mercy of any king who was strong enough to seize and hold it, and it successively passed into the possession of Kent, Mercia, and Wessex—whichever, in fact, of the petty Saxon kingdoms that was for the time paramount over the rest. But though the city counted for little as a place of strength, it began to recover its ancient name as a centre of trade. For in 734 we hear of King Ethelbald of Mercia granting to the Bishop of Rochester leave for one ship, whether his own or another's, to pass without tax into 'the port of London'; and the king also speaks of this tax on shipping as a royal right of his own and of his *predecessors*. So the traders were back again, and once more the little quays of Billingsgate and Dowgate were filled with heaps of merchandise. We cannot tell whether the Essex men invited them, or whether the merchants came of their own accord, attracted by the fame of the risen city, and willing to brave the dangers of the pirates that lurked in the creeks at the Thames mouth.

4. More than all else, the most powerful attraction for merchants to the Thames must have been the fact that London had now embraced Christianity. That meant that the Englishman 'was received into the company of civilised nations'; for missionary enterprise, trade, and civilisation

go ever hand in hand. Monasteries were founded, and monks came from across the seas to fill them. With the monks came the various arts of architecture, of painting, of illuminating manuscripts, and music. All these things gave the Londoners a new insight into life; and with this new insight arose new needs which only foreign commerce could supply. The Saxon of the eighth and ninth centuries was an utterly different creature from the fierce warrior of the fourth and fifth, whose only delight lay in war and ruthless plundering, and who would never brook the restraint of living within the four walls of a town. The Christian Saxon could be warlike still, if ever he was called to arms, as befitted the descendant of the first invaders of England, but he was beginning to find out how good a thing peace was from having enjoyed it so long. And peace, as he came to see, meant commerce, and commerce meant riches. Hence, as there always existed a strong trading instinct in the Teuton heart, he was content to forego war for peace and for the wealth which peaceful trade could bring him.

5. **Alfred and the Danes.**—London had been, as we have seen, the property of the Essex men, whose overlords were the kings of Kent. Between the years 718 and 811 it fell into the hands of the kings of Mercia, and in the latter year the first **Witan**[1] or National Council, was held in the town. It is then described as 'an illustrious place and a royal city.' After the fall of the power of Mercia, that of **Wessex** arose, and London became the property of the conquering nation. Egbert of Wessex, the grandfather of King Alfred, held a parliament (a witan) there in 833, at which he presided in person, and from that time onwards London gradually grew

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[1] The witan was the assembly of men of wit, or wise men.

to be the representative city of the nation. What London had decided on was for all men to follow or to obey. This parliament met to deliberate on a question which was becoming one of terrible danger to England. This was the coming of the **Danes.** What the Saxons had brought upon the Britons, that the Danes were now bringing to the doors of the Saxons themselves. Hearthstones sprinkled with blood, burning farm-steadings, and shrieking children torn away to slavery became too common stories among the Saxon settlements that lay near the coast. Soon the Danes became bolder. They no longer aimed their forays at the seaside towns, but, sailing up the Thames, fastened their attacks upon London itself. The town was first captured by them in the year 839, and again in 851; while in 872 they had begun to look upon it as so much their own city that they actually retired to it, as to headquarters, after making a truce with King Alfred.

6. **The wall rebuilt.**—To **Alfred,** who was king over England from 871 to 901, the war with the Danes was the work of a life. His military instinct pointed out to him how invaluable the possession of London would be as a defensive post, and he determined on its capture at all hazards. The city fell into his hands in 884, and after that year the Danes were never again able to take it by siege. On regaining possession of London, the first task of the king was to rebuild the walls, which the Danes had only repaired in a fragmentary sort of way. They, like the early Saxons, set little store by walls: their ideas of warfare were swift descents on defenceless towns and villages, and to sail away again as suddenly as they came, their high-beaked ships laden with rich booty of plunder and slaves.

The date of the rebuilding of the wall (886) is very important; for from that time London, with its ever-increasing trade and population, and now with its strong defences, became the heart of England. The possessor of London must sooner or later become lord over all England as well; and for hundreds of years afterwards the man whom London chose to accept as king was invariably recognised as such by all England. Alfred put the city thus fortified under the charge of Ethelred, the valiant ealdorman[1] of Mercia. Ethelred at once signalised his vice-royalty by a gallant feat of arms against the Danes. A nest of these pirates had settled themselves at Benfleet, on the northern bank of the Thames estuary, and were making the passage of the river unsafe for traders. The Londoners, led by Ethelred, attacked these marauders, broke up their settlement, and captured their leader. The Danes in revenge determined on a reprisal directed against London itself. They brought a large fleet of galleys up the Lea to a forest stronghold near Ware, and spent a whole winter preparing for their attack on the town. But Alfred swooped down upon them. He contrived to divert the water of the Lea into three channels, and the Danish ships were left high and dry. The Danes themselves were forced to take to a disastrous flight across their enemies' country; and of their abandoned ships the Londoners broke up some, and carried the strongest and best to London. All through the reign of King Alfred, and for nearly eighty years afterwards, London was the one important city in the south that held out against the Danes, whilst all the surrounding country was in their hands.

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[1] An ealdorman (or elderman) was the King's viceroy over a shire or a group of shires.

Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Sussex, and even the royal city of Winchester were Danish holdings. But London continued to defy their attacks, and to increase in wealth and prosperity. We find Athelstan, who reigned from the year 925 to 940, setting up two mints—one at London, and one at Canterbury—whence we may infer that these two towns were the chief commercial centres of the time. But to London he assigned eight coiners in the mint, to Canterbury only seven. In Athelstan's reign too we have another evidence of the security of property and the desire for corporate life on the part of the inhabitants, in the existence of a '**frith-gild.**' So London went on growing in pride and power till the accession of Ethelrede Unrede, one of the last, and one of the weakest, if not the weakest, of the kings that ever sat upon the English throne.

A **frith-gild** was something like what is now known as a benevolent society. Its chief objects were (a) to bestow alms; (b) by a subscription of fourpence as a kind of insurance fund, to make good any losses of its members; (c) to pay for the detection and prosecution of thieves that had robbed any member; and (d) to meet once a month for feasting and good-fellowship. The guilds (of which this is the first example), as we shall see later on, played a most important part in the history and commercial development of London.

7. **Ethelrede Unrede and the Danish Kings.**—Ethelrede ascended the English throne in the year 979, and in a very short time London and Canterbury were nearly all that was left to him of his kingdom. 'For London,' says Loftie, 'he did nothing but take refuge within her walls.' He was the first English king to impose upon his people the **Danegelt** (Dane money), a tax paid to the Danes to secure immunity from their invasions. But at the same time he treacherously encouraged the men of Wessex to the cowardly massacre of

the Danes on St. Brice's Day (November 13), 1002. Among the Danes who were murdered on that occasion (many of whom too had intermarried with the English) was Gunhilda, sister to Sweyn, King of Denmark. Sweyn instantly exacted a terrible vengeance for the treacherous murder of his people and his sister. Wessex was swept with fire and sword, and London was closely beleaguered. Twice Ethelrede bought off the Danish attack for enormous sums; but Sweyn only withdrew to prepare his forces for a fiercer onslaught. In the year 1012 he took Canterbury, and brought the Archbishop Alphage to Greenwich, where he slaughtered him almost under the eyes of the terrified citizens. Again the city was attacked. This time Ethelrede fled; and the citizens, being left without a king, opened their gates to the Danish conqueror. Sweyn became king over all England in 1013, but died in the following year. He left his throne to his son **Canute**, who, however, had to fight for the supremacy with Edmund Ironside, the son of the miserable Ethelrede. Edmund Ironside was crowned king in London; and it was over the possession of the city that the strife between the rival kings raged. Canute accordingly laid siege to London by land and water. He was unable to get his ships past London Bridge and the formidable outwork at Southwark; so he cut a circular trench through the swamp round Southwark, and, dragging his ships through it, was able to attack the city and the bridge on both sides, and prevent any one either entering or leaving the city. But the townsmen would not surrender; and London only fell into the hands of Canute, peaceably, in 1017. We can form some idea of the wealth of London at this time (even though it had suffered much from the attacks of the Danes, and though a great part of it had been burnt down in 982) from the fact that Canute compelled the Londoners to pay him a tribute of £11,000. This was one-seventh of the whole sum raised over all England, and was equivalent to about a quarter of a million in modern money.

From the time of Canute's occupation of the city there appears to have been a permanent Danish settlement in London. We find traces of this in **Tooley Street**, at the southern end of London Bridge, which is a corruption of St. Olaf's Street; in **Gutter Lane**, off Cheapside, which is properly Guthrum's Lane; and in the church of **St. Clement Danes**, which then stood far out of the city among the green fields of the Strand.

It is at this period that we first hear of a body of men who were representative of the wishes of the Londoners. These were the **lithsmen**,[1] or the commercial travellers, of London. On Canute's death the magnates of the realm met in parliament, or witan, at Oxford; and to this parliament came the lithsmen, to speak for the city whose wealth they represented.

8. **After Canute.**—We can pass over the reigns of Harold and Hardicanute, whose history had no connection with that of London, and come to the accession of **Edward the Confessor**, second son of Ethelrede Unrede. Edward's history identifies itself not so much with London as with that of Westminster. Here, upon the swampy island of Thorney, he built the West Minster—so called to distinguish it from the East Minster, which was St. Paul's. This was not, however, the Westminster Abbey that we see to-day; that was begun in the reign of Henry III. and not completed till 1735. Round the abbey-church a city subsequently sprang up, a city which had, and still has, an existence distinct from that

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[1] From the Anglo-Saxon *lithan*, to navigate.

of London proper. In Edward's time, however, no city of Westminster had yet been built, and the king probably lived in some of the abbey buildings.

(i) During the reign of this, the last but one of the English Kings, we again find a mention of London as a great port; for a council sitting in London orders the despatch of nine ships to patrol the Channel, and the retention of no fewer than five to protect the port of London.

(ii) There is again a fragmentary reference to the municipal government of London under Edward. The chief officers seem to have been a **staller** or marshal, who led out the citizens to battle, the **Bishop of London,** and the **Port Reeve** or port-officer, who controlled the imposition of the dues paid by the ships that visited the port. Add to these the **Knightenguild,** which was the ruling council of London, though informally constituted. The members of it were not chosen, but served on the council in virtue of their being property-owners; and their sons served after them. From the Knightenguild sprang the aldermen of the wards, as they were called later.

The word *reeve* (Anglo-Saxon *gerefa*) appears in our word sheriff=shire-reeve, and in the Scotch word grieve, the foreman of a farm.

9. **The Topography of Saxon London.**—The extent of the city remained pretty much the same as it was during the Roman period—that is to say, it nearly all lay within the walls. We have seen, however, that the Danes had a church on what is now the Strand, and just outside the Bishopsgate, by the Ermyn Way, there was another church dedicated to St. Botolph, the patron saint of East Anglia, so that the traveller thither might get the blessing of the saint before starting on his journey to the saint's resting-place at Boston. Both these churches were the nucleus of what we may call the Saxon 'Greater London'—the London that was spreading beyond the city boundaries. At Southwark too, in the neighbourhood of the fort, another small settlement was coming to life. Inside the city, in front of **St. Martins-le-Grand,** now the General Post-office, was the place of meeting

of the **folkmote**, the general gathering in which the free people met to discuss the political questions of the day. A little east of this was the **Cheap**[1] or Market, now Cheapside. This was the heart of London, and round it clustered the market booths, which were not, however, stationary shops, but mere stalls that could be removed at any time. The modern names of the streets in this neighbourhood keep alive the memory of these old Saxon shopkeepers. We find the names of the Poultry, the Vintry, Fish Street, Bread Street, Milk Street, Leadenhall (which is a corruption of Leather Hall), Honeymarket, Ironmonger Lane, and Wood Street. All of them take their names from the different commodities which were sold there. Then near St. Paul's was, and is, Paternoster Row (Our Father Row), where dwelt the people that sold prayer-books and beads to be used in church. 'At the great entrance to the cathedral the scene must have resembled that which we see at the doors of continental churches, which are often blocked up by stalls for the sale of rosaries, crucifixes, and breviaries.' The other great market of the time was the **East Cheap**, which was near the port of **Billingsgate.** Here would be done most of the business that related to foreign commerce. We can picture a crew of fierce-eyed northern vikings, turned traders for the nonce, chaffering over their cargo of French wines, and getting English iron in exchange, which they would forge into weapons to be used some day against the English themselves. Through Bishopsgate the Bishop of London would ride forth to hunt in his woods at Stepney. At the Steelyard by the Dowgate Wharf were weighed the goods that entered and left the port of London. And close by was the **Cold Harbour**, a house wherein the foreign merchants were 'harboured cold' —that is, they were given house-room, but had to provide their own bedding, food, and firing.

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[1] From the Anglo-Saxon 'ceapian,' to buy. Hence also Chepstow, Chippenham, Chipping Norton, etc.

'The buildings, till long after the Norman Conquest, were small and mean; the better houses were timber frames, with shutters or lattices, but no glass for the windows; the poorer houses were of wattle and daub. The churches were numerous and small. Some of them were still of wood, though a few were built of stone, with the simple circular arch.'—BESANT.

CHAPTER V

NORMAN LONDON

1. **London's first Charter.**—The battle of Hastings had been fought, and the Conqueror marched from Canterbury to London. He halted at Southwark, which he burnt, to strike terror into the hearts of the Londoners, and to convince them of the futility of further resistance. Nor was further resistance made; for a peace-embassy from the city went out to him in his camp to make terms and to offer him the crown of England. William accepted the offer—glad no doubt to get possession of the powerful and wealthy city in so easy a fashion—and appointed Christmas day, 1066, as the day on which he should be crowned in Westminster Abbey. As a return for the submission of the citizens, he granted them a Charter, the original document of which is still preserved in the Guildhall. It ran as follows: 'William, King, greets William, bishop, and Gosfrith, portreeve, and all the burghers within London, French and English, friendly; and I would have you know that I will that ye be all law-worthy that were in King Edward's day. And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day; and I will not endure that any man offer any wrong to you. God keep you.' A short document, but one of immense importance to the Londoners, and also of great interest to us; for

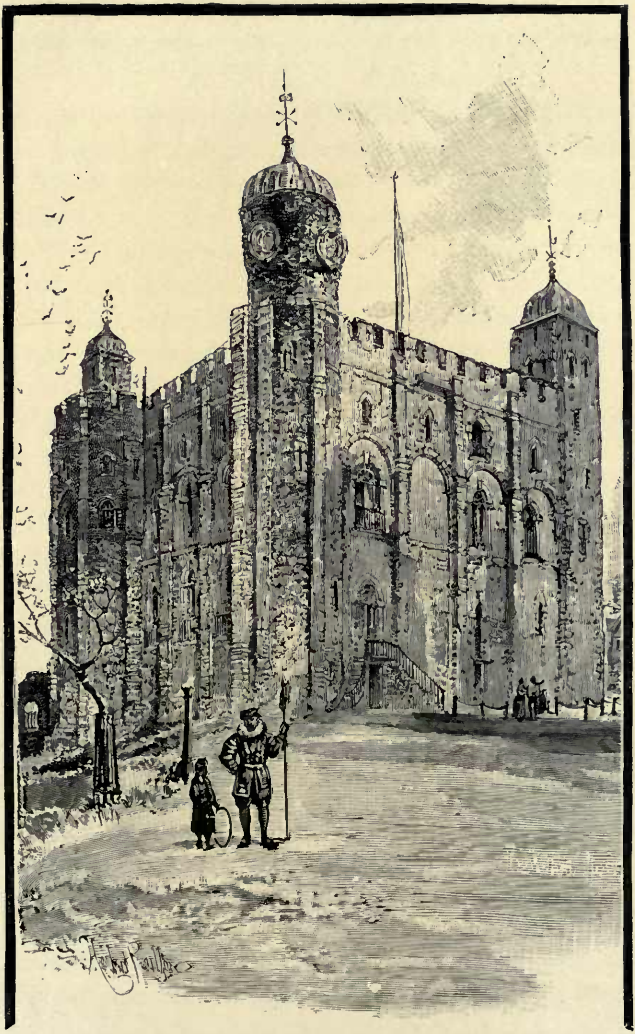
curtly worded as it is, there is much that we can learn from it. In the first place, William greets the **bishop** and the **portreeve**, that is to say, the two principal officers in London at the time, who were probably co-equal in authority. Next we learn that there was a recognised body of burghers within the city, both English and French; and there is little doubt but that the friendly tone of William's message was due partly to the presence of these Frenchmen, and partly to a desire to recognise and conciliate the powerful association of London merchants. Then William goes on to say that he desires that all should be law-worthy that were so under the reign of King Edward. The citizens, that is to say, were to continue in the enjoyment of their privileges as freemen; they were to be judged in their own courts, and were not to be set under the jurisdiction of any tyrannical Norman overlord. It is important to notice here that there never has been an Earl of London. London has never owned a feudal master; she was then a free city and her own mistress, and has been so ever since. Further, William maintains the security of property, in that he ordains that every man should be his father's heir. When the tenant under a feudal overlord died, his possessions in many cases went to the lord and not to his children; but this high-handed exercise of authority was, by virtue of the Conqueror's charter, never to be enforced against the people of London.

It is worth while noticing that William was crowned not in London, but in **Westminster.** Westminster (the story of which will be told later on in this book) is still the true capital of England—that is, it is the city in which lie the Courts of Justice and the Houses of Parliament. From the time of the Conquest onwards London proper ceased to be the official and permanent residence of the sovereigns of England.

2. **The Tower.**—Having got possession of the great city,

William's first care was to make that possession a lasting one. It was true that he now held London; but there was no saying how long he might continue to hold it. The people were bold and warlike; they had frequently endured a siege before; and it was not at all unlikely that, while William's attention and the majority of his forces were engaged elsewhere, the citizens might shut the gates against him, and stand the brunt of a siege again. To prevent this the Tower was begun. William's military eye had taught him that the space just outside the east end of the city wall was the strongest position for his new fortress. He therefore broke down the wall at the point where it nears the river, and there built the stronghold which was to overawe the turbulent citizens of London. 'The Tower of London is to the wall like a padlock on a chain'; for William was determined that, though London should be as strongly fortified as ever against outside enemies, it should have no defences against himself. He therefore enclosed a space of about twelve acres, and in 1078 gave the task of building the **White Tower**, the stronghold of the fortification, to Gundulf, bishop of Rochester, the greatest architect of his age. It took more than thirty years to build, and Gundulf was dead before it was completed. William Rufus continued his father's work, and the Tower was finally walled in, and a ditch dug round it, by William Longchamp in the year 1190. The White Tower, as we see it to-day, is still as it was left by Bishop Gundulf, and is the only important remnant of Norman London.

Though the Tower was often the occasional residence, and sometimes the refuge, of the Kings of England, it first contained only one fireplace. The main entrance was twelve feet above the ground, and that communicated



THE WHITE TOWER [*to face page* 36

with the interior by a narrow winding passage, so that a score of resolute men might hold the keep against an army.

3. **Henry the First's Charter.**—William Rufus enters little into the history of London; he continued his father's work in the Tower, but occupied himself chiefly in establishing the fast-rising neighbour-town of Westminster. The arrow of Wat Tyrrel (or another) pierced him on Thursday, August 2nd, 1100; and on the following Saturday his brother, Henry, was in London, and was crowned king at Westminster the next day. In return for this espousal of his cause by the Londoners, Henry granted them a second charter. It was far fuller than that granted by his father, and is a measure of the growing importance of the city. The King first of all absolves the citizens from any kind of feudal service, from Danegeld, from wager of battle,[1] and from certain tolls. Secondly, he made over to them Middlesex to be farmed on his behalf for a payment of £300 a year—a payment that the City still pays to the Crown; they were to be allowed to appoint their own sheriffs, both of Middlesex and of London; and they were to have liberty to hawk or hunt in the forests of Middlesex and Surrey, and among the Chiltern Hills. This last was an immense concession to be made by a Norman monarch, for every Norman king was most jealous of his hunting privileges. Finally, the Londoners were to have their own justiciar or judge, who should try cases within the city limits.

4. **Stephen and Maud.**—On the death of Henry in 1135, and in the civil strife that followed, London stood by Stephen, and indeed practically brought about his election as king.

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[1] Wager of battle was a method of settling any dispute by fighting it out. God was supposed to be on the side of the just cause.

But Stephen in his turn did not deal honourably with the men of London; and Maud, when she chanced to obtain possession of the city, took away all that had been granted by her father's charter. The citizens petitioned for the restoration of their liberties, but Maud arrogantly refused; whereupon she was instantly expelled from the town, and her chief adherent was made prisoner by the warlike townsmen. It was in Stephen's reign that the first Great Fire of London occurred, in 1136, though another extensive one had occurred in 1077. It started about London Stone, and burnt westward along Watling Street, and eastward as far as Aldgate. London Bridge, which was at that time built of wood, fell a victim to its fury. All that was left, both of Roman (if there was anything left of that) and of Saxon London, was totally effaced by this, the first of the great fires. After it the city sprang up anew.

5. **The Government of London.**—We have got so far in the government of the city that we find it is now entitled to appoint two sheriffs, of London and of Middlesex, a justiciar, and a portreeve. There was also the council of the aldermen, or chief men, of the wards, though that council had no formally recognised standing. In 1189 the title of the portreeve became changed, and in that year we have our first record of the **Mayor** of **London** in **Henry Fitzaylwin.** He was not yet called 'Lord Mayor'; in fact, that title is simply one of common custom and use, and was never legally conferred. Fitzaylwin held office for twenty-four years, and on his death a new charter was granted by King John in 1214, which enacted that a new mayor should be chosen each year, as has ever since been done. Even now—even under the first William—London was a free city; and a

very large part of her history henceforth consists of an account of the struggle to maintain her freedom against royal encroachments.

6. **Fitzstephen's Account.**—Up to this point in the history of London contemporary evidence has been very scanty, but from the reign of Henry II. we have left to us a document of priceless value, which gives a brief sketch of London as it was under the rule of the Norman and early Plantagenet kings. This is **William Fitzstephen**'s account, which was written in 1174. He was the friend of the martyred Thomas à Becket; and in writing the life of the murdered archbishop he prefixed to it some description of the town in which he was born. Fitzstephen was proud of his town for itself, and proud of it as being the birthplace of his hero; and though his story may be a highly coloured one, yet it is the kind of colouring we would not willingly be without.

Topography.—Fitzstephen describes the Tower, and the two smaller keeps—Montfichet's Tower, where Blackfriars Station stands now, and near it Baynard's Castle.

The walls, he tells us, had seven double gates, and out of the eastern gate—the Aldgate—there led a road to cross the Lea at Stratford-atte-Bow,[1] where a bow-shaped bridge was thrown over the river. The river-wall was by this time thrown down, and a line of populous suburbs led out to Westminster by way of Holborn Hill. The city still fitted loosely within its walls, for the houses of the well-to-do citizens were surrounded by gardens. Outside the walls rose pleasant springs like **Holywell** and **Clerkenwell**; and to the northward the great forest stretched, teeming with boars, deer, and wild oxen. At **Smoothfield**, or Smithfield, there was a large cattle and horse market, where races were held once a week. He tells us that in his time London possessed 126 parish churches, and thirteen conventual establishments, inhabited by monks or nuns. The population, which amounted probably to about 63,000, was thinnest round the Newgate and Aldgate, and thickest along the line of Watling Street, and thence down to the river. In fact, he tells us, London was a delightful town but for the 'excessive drinking of fools and the frequency of fires'; for the houses were chiefly built of timber, and the streets were very narrow. The most important and the widest of the streets was the '**Chepe**'—a wide open space lined on both sides by booths, which could be removed when needed, and of which the existence is still commemorated by the names of the modern streets off Cheapside.

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[1] Stratford was the ford by which the Roman 'street' (or 'strat') crossed the river before the bridge was built.

Several instances have been given already. We may add a few more. Thus **Friday Street** indicates that dried fish for fast-days was sold there. **Soper's** (i.e. *Soaper's*) **Lane** (now Queen Street, Cheapside), explains itself; while in **Trump Street**, close to the Guildhall, lived the makers of trumpets for the city watchmen.

7. **The life of the people.**—Fitzstephen writes joyously about his city. It was happy in the wholesomeness of its climate, in the strength of its fortresses, and in the number of magnates who 'resort thither and spend largely.' Even in those days London was becoming a great centre of finance and one of the world's pleasure-grounds. London is one of the most charming places to live in, 'at least when it has the happiness to be well governed.' The picture he draws of the amusements of the Londoners is a pleasant one. There were many sports and games, which the elders of the city viewed from horseback, feeling themselves young again at the sight.

The scholars and the young men took an airing in summer evenings near the clear sweet waters of Holywell and Clerkenwell. On Shrove Tuesday the boys brought fighting-cocks with them to school, and the cocks fought each other all morning in the schoolroom. Football was played too: and the scholars of each school, as well as the apprentices of every trade, had their own peculiar ball. There was indeed plenty of play for the boys; but there was plenty of work too. There were three schools in London, attached to three churches, the Cathedral of St. Paul, St. Martin's-le-Grand, and St. Mary-le-Bow; and there was a fourth in connection with the Abbey of Westminster. On festival-days of the Church, the masters assembled their scholars at one or other of these churches, and there they were made to engage in public debate with each other Or the boys from different schools would wrangle with one another in Latin verse, or contend about 'the principles of grammar and the rules of the perfect tense.'

The older boys and the young men had horse-races outside the walls every Sunday in Lent, and tilted[1] at each other with lance and shield. At Easter time a mast was fixed in the bed of the Fleet; and a youngster, standing upright in a boat, which was rowed fast past the target nailed to the mast, had to strike at it with a lance. If he shivered his lance fairly, he gained a triumph; if not, he was tumbled into the water by the force of the blow, to the huge delight of the spectators that lined the balconies on either side of the river. In summer time there was archery, running, leaping, wrestling, and putting the stone; and the maidens, when the moon rose, danced to the guitar. In winter our ancestors baited, with dogs, bulls and huge bears, and boars that fought to the last gasp. 'And when that vast lake which waters the city towards the north[1] is hard frozen, the youth, in great numbers, go to divert themselves on the ice.' Some slid, and some made a rude sort of skate by tying bones on their feet, with which, says Fitzstephen, 'they are carried along with a speed equal to the flight of a bird'! The elder among the citizens found their pleasure in hunting the deer and the boar, and in hawking for the herons that waded about among the fenny pools and nested in the great trees of the Middlesex Forest.

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[1] Tilting was a game played on horseback, wherein one player strove to knock the other off his horse with a spear.

8. **Some buildings in Norman London.**—Saxon London was completely destroyed by the fire of 1136, and much of it must also have succumbed to the previous fires of 961 and 1077. Fitzstephen had indeed reason to complain of the frequency of fires. Yet they directly contributed to the beautification of London, for, in place of the undistinguished, often mean, buildings of the Saxon, the Norman priestly architects erected their stately and massive structures.

(i) **St. Paul's** was commenced in 1087, after the old church of Bishop Mellitus was burned down in 961. Fifty years later nearly all of what had been already built was consumed by fire.

(ii) **St. Bartholomew's Hospital.**—This hospital, which lay then just outside the wall to the north of the Newgate, was founded in 1123, in the reign of Henry I. The founder was **Rahere**, the king's minstrel; and he built it and the church of St. Bartholomew the Great, part of which still remains, for the reception of 'poor men.'

(iii) **London Bridge.**—In 1091 there was a wooden bridge over the Thames, which was swept away by a heavy flood. It was rebuilt and destroyed again in the fire of 1136. Again it was restored, but too hurriedly, for the work had to be done afresh thirty years later by Peter, priest of Cole Church, a chapel in the Poultry. This building took from 1176 to 1209, and the stone bridge then built stood till the year 1831.

[1] The fens of Moorfields and Finsbury. Bone skates have been dug up in this district.

9. **The Guilds and Trade.**—The citizens of London early learned the great lesson that union is strength: that combination would enable them to resist any encroachment on the part of their kings or any one else who wished to ride roughshod over them. This combination sprang out of the **craft-guilds.** These were associations formed by the workmen of each particular trade, and the trades'-unions of to-day are descendants of them. But the guilds did more than modern trades'-unions. They taught their members the dignity of their craft; they instructed them in the best methods of working; they insured them against oppression; and by keeping them together they made them a power in the State. The chief guild of all was the **merchant-guild,** which held its meetings in the **Guildhall,** and which at first controlled the whole government of the city. Later on, the craft-guilds struggled against the exclusive merchant-guild, and finally obtained their proper share in the municipal government.

As London increased her commerce, the old simple methods of barter no longer sufficed, and a race of money-changers and bill-discounters sprang up. These were the **Lombards,** Italian merchants, who originally came to this country to collect taxes in wool on behalf of the Pope, and afterwards launched out into trade on their own account. They settled in the street called after them **Lombard Street,** which is still the chief centre of the banking interest; and for many centuries they held the money-broking business of London in their hands. Fitzstephen gives a brief list of the various **imports into London** at this time: they included gold (as he says, from Arabia!), frankincense, palm-oil, furs (from Norway and Russia), silks and wines from France. Notice that foods—corn and meat—were not imported at all, though they now comprise about two-thirds of the whole of the English imports. England was then a self-sufficing country, and did not depend on foreign lands for food supplies; indeed corn was one of her main exports.

English trade received a great impetus through the eleventh and twelfth centuries by the increase of **pilgrimages.** The London pilgrim tramped across the continent to Rome; and, if he could be received into the company of some of the powerful Knights of St. John, he would even venture into the Holy Land. In his pilgrimage he would recount the resources of his own land, and encourage foreigners to come after them; and similarly, when he returned home, he would fire the minds of the English merchants with tales of the riches he had seen abroad.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY PLANTAGENET LONDON

1. **The Struggle for Municipal Liberty.**—Henry II. succeeded to the throne of England in 1154—less than a hundred years after the landing of William the Conqueror. But even in this short space of time from the Conquest, the old Saxon spirit of liberty, which had never died out in London—whatever might have been the case in the rest of England—had begun to assert itself strongly once more. Nearly the whole history of this period, from the accession of Henry II. to the death of Henry III. in the year 1272, is a story of how the men of London strove for their rights and privileges with the nearly absolute power of the king. They strove with the king; but they also disputed among themselves. For, as the city increased in wealth, the richer merchants, the capitalists of the time, banded themselves together into a coalition against their poorer fellow-citizens. The 'barons' of the city, the **merchant-guild**, enjoyed a monopoly of the civic government, to a share in which the commons, the members of the **craft-guilds**, steadfastly asserted their claims. The quarrel raged fiercely between the parties. The king craftily fomented the dispute, and, by siding first with one faction and then with the other, ultimately—though only for a time—got the better of both.

2. All the earlier Plantagenet kings looked on London as

their milch-cow—as a standing source of revenue—from which money could either be wrung by force or procured in a kind of legal way in exchange for charters, which pretended to grant the citizens privileges which they had never really lost. Thus **Richard,** the Lion-Heart, who would have sold the whole city if he could have found a purchaser, granted the people 'conservancy' rights over the Thames. London was the chief contributor towards the raising of King Richard's ransom; and when he came back and was riding through the streets of London amidst shouts of welcome from the citizens, a German nobleman in the royal train remarked that, had his master, the Emperor of Austria, known how rich a city London was, he would have demanded thrice as great a ransom from King Richard. **John,** in signing the Magna Charta, was compelled to insert a special clause affirming the ancient privileges of London and its right to free customs—the right, that is, to import certain kinds of goods without paying duty on them. **Henry III.,** on being brought prisoner to London by Simon de Montfort after the battle of Lewes, swore to be the protector of the city; and the then mayor, FitzThomas, said before all the people to the captive king, who was holding his court in St. Paul's, 'So long as unto us you will be a good lord and king, we will be faithful and duteous unto you.'

3. This point stands as the high-water mark of the power which London attained to under her first Plantagenet rulers: for long afterwards London was in no position to dictate terms to her king. For the battle of Evesham was fought in 1265; Earl Simon the Good, in whose parliament the first M.P.'s for London had sat, was killed; and London, which had stood staunchly by the barons in 1215, and whose best blood

had been shed in defence of popular liberties by Prince Edward at Lewes, lay under the heel of the victorious Henry. And Henry kept his heel pressed hard on her neck. For six years onwards, from 1265, the people were governed by wardens appointed by the King, and not by the mayors whom they should have chosen for themselves; the citizens were oppressed by excessive taxes on everything that went in and out of the city; the bridge was allowed to fall into squalid disrepair; and the ancient government of London seemed dead for a time. But in the year 1272, when the weak and fatuous Henry lay dying at Westminster, the Londoners thronged into Westminster Hall, crying day after day that a mayor should be elected; and their cries 'reached his lordship the King in bed, where he lay very sick.' Five days after he died. One of his chief councillors then caused the great bell of St. Paul's to be tolled to summon the people to their folk-mote[1] (the general assembly of the citizens), and told them that the mayor they wished for, Walter Hervey, would be admitted to office.

(i) In connection with the charter granted by Richard to London for the 'conservancy' of the course of the Thames, we may note that the city was entrusted with the superintendence of the weirs on the river. The new weir then erected near Rochester has given its name to the **Nore**, which is still the eastern boundary of the city's jurisdiction over the river.

(ii) During the reign of John an important addition was made to the governing body of the city. 'Five and twenty of the more discreet men' were chosen to take counsel, along with the mayor, for the government of London. This was what afterwards came to be known as the **Common Council**; and the ruling body of the city thus consisted of the mayor and his sheriffs, the aldermen, who were chosen for each ward, and whose jurisdiction was for a long time hereditary, and these twenty-five 'discreet men,' who now number two hundred and six.

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[1] Folk-mote = the 'mote,' or meeting of the folk, or people.

4. **The Story of Longbeard.**—William Fitzosbert was a man 'poor in degree and evil-favoured in shape,' and was noted for the long beard which gave him his nickname, and for a rough eloquence that powerfully stirred the common people. For of the common people he was the champion, both against the King and against the haughty merchant-princes, and the spokesman too of the craft-guilds as opposed to the merchant-guild, in whose hands most of the ruling power lay. When Longchamp was completing the fortifications of the Tower in the year 1190, some of Longbeard's land round Aldgate and near to the Tower was seized to enable the building to go on. Longbeard swore to be avenged on the King (Richard) and his chancellor for this injustice, and said openly that he would lay out forty marks for a chain to hang them both. For this bold utterance he was put on his trial, but must have got off either with a light punishment or none at all, for he very soon blazed up again. On the return of King Richard from captivity, the city had to pay heavily for the expenses of his ransom. Longbeard revolted against this at once; he could not endure to see an exorbitant taxation put on the people, and caused the great bell to clang out a meeting in the open Cheap in front of St. Paul's. With fiery words he exhorted the people to make a stand against the King's demands, and against those members of the merchant-guild who approved of them. But nothing could be done in the face of the wealthy aldermen, the rulers of the city. A riot broke out in the streets, and officers were sent to arrest Longbeard as the ringleader of it. He was arrested, but managed to escape from his guards, and took refuge in the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow, or Bow Church, in Cheapside (so called because it was built on vaulted arches).

There he and some friends had laid up a store of provisions, and they were ready to stand a siege. Command or entreaty failed to bring him out; so at last faggots were placed against the church doors, and he and his comrades were smoked out of their refuge. Though this took place on a Wednesday of the Passion Week, Longbeard was straightway dragged by the heels through the city streets, and ignominiously hanged in Smithfield. Crowds—52,000 says the chronicler—stood round the scaffold shedding tears; the scaffold was carried away piecemeal for relics; and the people scraped away the soil on which he last trod on earth, and kept it as a talisman to heal the sick. So Longbeard died; but the lesson his death taught lived on. For from henceforth the people of London—as distinct from the richer governing classes—began to recognise and enforce their power. Thus in 1249, when the mayor and aldermen were treating with the King's justices on some question of policy, the people interfered and insisted that nothing should be settled without their leave; and again in 1257 they rejected a certain regulation of the aldermen concerning weights and measures.

The city was divided into two parties, the aristocratic or conservative party and the popular party. Some of the names of the first are still preserved in the City; as that of the **Bokerels** in Bucklersbury, of the **Farringdons** in Farringdon Street, and of the **Basings** in Basinghall Street. But from the year of the Great Charter (1215) onwards we find mayors bearing such names as **Serlo le Mercer, Bartholomew le Spicer** (the grocer), **Walter le Potter, Alan le Hurer** (capmaker), and the like. It was then therefore that the members of the **craft-guilds** began to assert themselves against the **merchant-guild.**

5. **The Mayoralty of FitzThomas.**—The work that had been begun by Longbeard was carried on by FitzThomas. He taught the people, the lower classes, the lesson that in

them lay a resistless power, and showed them how to organise against the narrow ring of prominent families that had for so long kept the government in their hands alone. He became mayor in the year 1262, when an opportunity was soon given him of standing up for the privileges of the citizens. The Constable of the Tower, a King's officer, attempted to take toll of some corn-barges that were bound for Queenhithe. FitzThomas instantly interfered, and told the Constable that, if he dared to use force, his Londoners would reply to force with force. The Constable knew the power of the City, and the barges passed free. Under his mayoralty, too, the whole of the citizens, in their burgh-mote, were consulted on every important question, and were asked their will on it. If they assented, they shouted Yea! Yea! and the thing was done; but the aldermen, the property owners, and members of the merchant-guild were little consulted. FitzThomas saw clearly enough that it was with the people that real power lay, and he both acquired and retained his influence by dealing with the people directly, and not, through the aldermen, at second hand.

6. During his tenure of office the existence of the **craft-guilds** was legally recognised; and every trade—goldsmiths, butchers, bakers, scriveners, weavers, dyers, and the rest—was organised into a formidable group of trades'-unions, which could make head against the aristocratic governing body, which was the **merchant-guild**. Thus when Simon de Montfort marched towards London, and opened negotiations with FitzThomas, the Mayor was at the head of a powerful organisation, which could be of inestimable service to the Earl in his attempt to enforce the claim of popular liberties on the King.

In the year 1263 FitzThomas was chosen mayor for the second time. Along with the sheriffs, the mayor-elect repaired to Westminster, and demanded formal recognition from the King (Henry III.), as custom demanded. But the King would have none of him, and issued a writ forbidding his admission to office. The citizens, enraged at the slight cast upon the man of their choice, determined to break from their allegiance to the King. Earl Simon de Montfort was at Southwark, and the people burst the bridge gate and let him in to the city. At this juncture too, the Queen, who was lodging at the Tower, took boat to join her husband at Westminster. The people clustered on the bridge, and, in revenge for the insult to their mayor, hooted and yelled at the Queen, and pelted her with stones and filth, till she was forced to turn back. London thus stood definitely committed to Earl Simon's cause; and, as the mayor had not received formal recognition and was therefore not their legal chief, they chose two of their number to command the London contingent in the coming battle with the King's forces. In the battle of Lewes, which followed, De Montfort was victorious, and the King was made prisoner But 'Sir Edward le Fitzroy'[1] (*i.e.* the King's son), took bitter vengeance for the insult the Londoners had put upon his mother, and drove them before him like sheep to the slaughter. Though the army returned to London in triumph, 'many a cresset fire was unlighted in the street, and many a shuttered front told of death and mourning within.'

7. The year 1264 saw FitzThomas mayor again. But this time Henry, who was little better than a close prisoner, could not refuse to induct him, and promised further that he would

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[1] 'Fitz' means son of, and 'roy' means king.

hold the citizens scatheless for the part they had played in the late war. It was on this occasion that the mayor used the noble words recorded above. But the King, as became a son of the faithless John, secretly nursed his wrath, and bided his time. The battle of Evesham was fought on the 4th of August 1265; and on that day a fierce thunder-storm burst over the city, which the Londoners were destined to remember for many a year. 'Sir Edward' had now full vengeance for his mother's disgrace and his father's imprisonment; and Henry was at last ready to exact a full reckoning from the citizens. FitzThomas, elected mayor for the fourth time, again boldly went to Westminster to receive admission to office at the hands of the King. But the doors of the Hall were closed against him, and the mayor-elect and his sheriffs had to return to London with hearts full of fear and dismay for what was in store for them all. Then came the King's demands: the citizens were to dismantle all the fortifications they had begun, to submit themselves wholly, life and limb, to the royal pleasure, and to deliver up the mayor and the leading citizens to the court at Windsor. There was no choice but to obey; and FitzThomas and his principal adherents departed for Windsor, but not until a safe-conduct was solemnly promised them by the representatives of the King. What followed is unknown, but may easily be guessed: the safe-conduct was as if it had never been given, and FitzThomas was heard of no more. Henry fined the city £100,000, and with an extremity of insult issued a charter acknowledging the receipt of the fine, and graciously saying that, in return for it, 'he remitted his indignation unto the citizens.'

8. **The religious houses of London.**—The most striking

characteristic of Early Plantagenet London was the number and beauty of the religious houses by which it was covered. It has been computed that the buildings alone covered two-thirds of the whole area of the city, and that the people who dwelt in them numbered about a fourth of the whole population. London at this time was indeed a ‘forest of spires and towers. One must remember that the Church during this period was all-powerful—powerful even over the King himself; and it is therefore but natural that the church buildings, both in beauty and strength, should be emblems of that power. The different monasteries and priories were inhabited either by **monks** or by **friars**. The monks generally confined themselves within the walls of their dwellings—reading, thinking, studying, illuminating manuscripts, and healing the sick when they were brought to them. But the friars went out into the world. At first they were supposed to possess nothing of their own; they begged their bread and raiment from door to door; they preached both in churches and in the streets—even in a market-place the friar would hold forth if he could get an audience.

9. But it must not be supposed that the monks were the only inhabitants of the monasteries; round each great house there gathered a large army of retainers. There were people to look after the brew-house, there were bakers and cooks, there were stablemen and foresters, architects, carpenters, and workmen of every kind. The house was complete in itself—it had no need to go outside when any special piece of work had to be performed. Furthermore, both monks and friars, as they grew richer, and as pious donors made magnificent presents to their houses, began to be the chief customers for the luxuries that were brought to the port of London

from abroad. At the quays of Queenhithe and Billingsgate were landed the costly wines, the silks and the spices, which soon came to be necessities to the monks that were once so frugal in their wants and so austere in their lives.

It would be impossible to give a detailed list of the great religious houses of this time. We can only mention a few of them. Of these, some, or parts of them, still stand; of others the only memorials of their existence are the names of the different streets where they once stood. It is to be observed that the monasteries, or most of them at all events, stood either just within or just without the city wall. The reason for this is obvious; for the population down towards the river was denser, and land was therefore dearer; and the monks always took care to have ample space round their houses, to permit of additions being made, and outhouses built as dwellings for their numerous dependants.

(i) The most powerful order among the monks was that of the **Benedictines**, and of this order the **Carthusians** were the most celebrated. Their house was the **Charterhouse** (a corruption of Chartreuse, which was the name of their original monastery in France), and it stood outside the wall, at the upper end of Aldersgate Street. The house itself (on the site of which was built the famous **Charterhouse** School in 1611, where Addison, Wesley, and Thackeray were educated) was not built till 1371; but the monks were in England long before that time. The Carthusians were once the strictest of religious orders. No monk was allowed to speak to another; they had but one meal a day, except on Sundays; they never left the cloister except for purposes of labour; and while they bestowed care on the stranger and the sick, they punished their own bodies with merciless severities for the health of their souls. Also without the wall lay **Spitalfields**, which were the estates belonging to the **St. Mary Spital** or Hospital; while another hospital and priory, dedicated to St. Bartholomew, stood where **Bartholomew's Hospital** stands to-day, near the Smoothfield or Smithfield cattle market.

(ii) Inside the walls there were the three great houses of the **Augustine** or

Austin Friars, the **Grey Friars** or Franciscans, and the **Blackfriars** or Dominicans, of whom but the names remain. (It is worthy of note that, speaking generally, the Monks of England established themselves in the country, and taught the people round them such arts as farming, fruit-culture, and road-making. But the Friars came to the crowded cities and worked in the slums, where leprosy, the Black Death, and other foul diseases made havoc among the poorer classes.) Austin Friars, which once stood on the banks of the Walbrook, is now a mass of busy offices, inhabited by financiers and bankers. The Grey Friars dwelt where now stands the Bluecoat School[1] in Newgate Street. The Franciscans, originally only nine in number, came to England in 1224 absolutely penniless, and dwelt at first in some mud-huts on a piece of waste ground, surrounded by slaughter-houses, on Cornhill. From being dwellers in these poor huts they rose, by the earnestness of their teaching and the splendid example of their lives, to be one of the richest foundations in England. The Black, or Preaching Friars, built their house on the ground which is now covered by St. Paul's and Ludgate Hill railway stations, on the eastern bank of the Fleet. The city wall was pulled down for this purpose and rebuilt further to the westward.

(iii) On the other side of the Fleet, going westwards, and behind Fleet Street, two names that still survive remind us of two more great religious foundations. The first was that of the **White Friars**, near the modern street of the same name, which runs off Fleet Street. Quite near the White Friars stood the **Temple**, once the habitation of the half-warrior, half-religious brotherhood of the **Knights Templar**, but now a collection of lawyers' offices.

SPENSER, writing in 1596, speaks of the TEMPLE as—

'Those bricky towers
The which on THAMES' broad agèd back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the TEMPLAR KNIGHTS to bide,
Till they decayed thro' pride.'

(iv) On the other side of the river, just opposite the Houses of Parliament, stood **St. Thomas's Hospital** in Southwark, first founded in 1313 as an almshouse, and now one of London's greatest hospitals.

10. **The Life of the People.**—Though England was 'Merry England' then, and though, as Fitzstephen has told us, the amusements of the people were many and varied, the life that many of them led was squalid in the extreme. Even

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[1] This school was in 1902 removed to West Horsham in Sussex, and its site will be shortly occupied by the new buildings of the General Post Office.

the rich had little notion of what comfort meant. Their houses outside were splendid with heraldic devices and quaint wood-carving; but inside, the rooms, all except the great hall, were small and mean, with draughty windows and ill-fitting doors. The servants slept on the floor in the dining-hall, among the rushes that served for a carpet, and along with the dogs that gnawed the bones thrown under the table. In the time of Richard I. an ordinance was issued (but little attended to) that all houses should be built sixteen feet high, of stone instead of wood, to prevent fires, and also that they should be whitewashed. About this time we hear of Londoners complaining for the first time that the smoke from the coal-fires besmirched their clean white walls. The streets too were in a dangerous condition owing to the bands of ruffians that roamed about at night, robbing and murdering. A company of these rogues was arrested in the reign of Henry II.; and their leader, a man of good birth called John the Old, was hanged as a warning to the others, even though he was rich enough to offer five hundred marks for his ransom. The streets had no pavement and no lights. The Cheap itself was littered with heaps of putrefying offal, thrown out by the butchers and the fishmongers. Small wonder that the plague attacked London so frequently; for between the years 962 and 1665 (the year of the last attack) London was visited no less than twenty times by the pestilence. And the cause of it all was dirt.

11. Early in the thirteenth century many regulations were made to put a stop to adulteration of food and to bakers' giving short weight. In the year 1258 no less a person than the Lord Chief Justice presided at the Guildhall (though that was really contrary to the liberties of the

city, for London had its own magistrates) over the trial of certain bakers charged with giving short weight. They were sentenced to be ducked, whereas before such offenders were punished by the pillory. It was in that same year that London was scourged by a fierce famine. Corn rose to an enormous price, and had to be imported from Germany and Holland. The famine was followed by a pestilence, which is said to have carried off 15,000 of the people of London. During Henry III.'s reign, a company of German merchants, called the Hanseatic League, established themselves in the Steelyard, which is exactly under the present site of Cannon Street railway station. These men supplied London with furs, tar, fish (especially herrings and salt cod, on which the English fed their troops on service), and wax (which was in great request for church candles and for making official seals), and enjoyed the monopoly of the whole trade from Germany and the Baltic In return for these important privileges of trade, the Hanseatic League bound themselves to maintain and protect the Bishopsgate in time of war. This association of German merchants lingered on in London, though of course with greatly diminished privileges, as late as 1853.

At a later date these Hanseatic merchants became known as the **Easterlings**, or men from the East. Their money, which was coined at a fixed weight and was gladly taken everywhere as an English sovereign is now, came to be called Easterling or **Sterling** money. The name of their house, the **Steelyard**, is a corruption of stafelyard or *stapleyard*, which means 'market-yard.'

CHAPTER VII

LONDON UNDER THE LATER PLANTAGENETS

1. **Edward I.**—On the coming of Edward to the throne of England, the effects of the misgovernment and oppression of Henry III.'s reign were everywhere apparent; and it became one of the King's first cares to set the city in order again. The power of the merchant-guild was weakened, but there was no body strong enough to take its place in the control of the city. The mayoralty was indeed continued till 1285, but all this period is characterised by murderous rioting and every kind of disorder. One year the sheriffs themselves were expelled from office for taking bribes; another year one Michael Thovy, a member of one of the oldest of the city families, was hanged for murders and robberies; and on one occasion the whole mass of prisoners broke out of Newgate prison and escaped.

2. **The Wardens.**—This lawless state of affairs chafed the temper of the order-loving soldier king, and in 1285 he 'took the city into his own hands,' and kept it there for twelve years. **Wardens** were appointed by the King instead of mayors by the citizens, and they governed the city justly and well, being always careful to consult the principal citizens on all questions of importance. The wardens introduced many reforms, designed chiefly towards making London more

habitable and healthy. The streets leading down to the river were levelled and cleaned; each inhabitant that dwelt on the bank of the Walbrook was given a rake to keep the stream from fouling; and four persons were sworn in to seize all pigs that were found wandering about the streets. Even more important, however, than these necessary sanitary reforms, was the first attempt, made in 1285, to provide London with an artificial supply of water. In that year a great **conduit** was made in Cheapside, and water was conducted to it in leaden pipes from the **Tyburn**. London, in fact, was governed strongly and wisely, and the administration of the wardens laid the foundations of good government for the future. Under the formidable rule of the first Edward, the peace of London was never disturbed by any attack from without. In the year 1305 the citizens flocked to Westminster Hall to see the Scottish patriot, William Wallace, crowned in mockery with a crown of laurels, and crowds followed the tumbril that drew him to the place of execution at Smithfield.

(i) It was during the reign of King Edward I. that the whole body of **Jews** were expelled from England. Since the Conquest, the most of them had lived round about the street still known as **Old Jewry**. Though they had undergone savage persecution at the hands of the people and tyrannous extortion from the kings, they were a wealthy colony, being the chief money-lenders of the time, and possessing a great deal of house property, for they were always remarkable for their skill in building.

(ii) In 1189 a number of the Jews had been savagely massacred at the coronation of Richard I.; readers of *Ivanhoe* will remember too what were the miseries that the unhappy race had to endure under the reign of King John; but with the advent of Edward I. their misfortunes seem to come to a head. They were not allowed to practise their trade of money-lending; on every conceivable occasion they were rigorously fined; and they were forced to wear an odiously distinctive dress. In the year 1279 two hundred and ninety-three Jews, men and women, were hanged wholesale on an accusation of clipping the coinage, and eleven years later the whole colony was ordered to embrace Christianity or leave the country. It is not at all clear why Edward should have ordered or encouraged their expulsion, as for many years the Jews had been a constant source of supply to the English Kings when all other modes of raising money had failed.

(iii) Walter Hervey, the first mayor that held office when Edward succeeded to the throne, granted formal charters of incorporation to the trades or **craft-guilds.** This was the first step in the process by which the craft-guilds ultimately rose to the dignity of **livery companies.** From this time the power of the merchant-guild began to wane.

(iv) During Edward I.'s reign the mayor of London was first called **Lord Mayor.** But that style did not become a settled custom till the time of Richard II. In the City of London the Lord Mayor was absolutely the first personage, and in all official ceremonies he still takes precedence of everybody except the Sovereign, or the accredited representatives of the Crown.

3. **Edward II. to Edward III.: The Companies.**—Under the weak rule of Edward of Carnarvon, London suffered much from misgovernment and much from scarcity of food. Edward himself did little but oppress the city, and attempt to extort money by unlawful means. Rioting became common again in the streets, and the old detestation of the Jews was now directed against the **Lombards**, the Italian bankers who had taken their place as usurers. It is a fact significant of the times that the citizens were forbidden to wear their swords in public. The most important step taken in this reign towards fixing the municipal constitution was the order that every man should belong to a **craft-guild** before he was allowed a vote or voice in the management of city politics; and the King formally granted royal charters to certain craft-guilds, which should raise them to the position of **livery companies,**[1] and gave them a direct share

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[1] A livery company was so called because its members wore a uniform or livery.

in the government of London. After the shameful death of Edward II. in Berkeley Castle, the Londoners gave a warm welcome to the young king. A commercial treaty had just been made with Flanders, as the result of Edward III.'s marriage with Philippa of Hainault, and the benefits that thereby accrued to the trading community in London made the boy king very popular with the citizens. Edward continued the work that had been begun by his father, and granted, in exchange for the money necessary to the carrying on of his French campaigns, charters to many companies,—among others to the grocers, the fishmongers, the drapers, and the vintners; and after the battle of Poitiers he did the company of linen-armourers (now called the merchant-taylors) the very great honour of enrolling himself as one of their members. Since that time almost every English king has been an honorary member of that distinguished company.

4. The livery companies were now, next of course to the Lord Mayor, the paramount power in the city They not only controlled all the city elections, but they afforded a powerful protection to the public against adulterated foods, and against bad workmanship of every kind. The goldsmiths assayed gold and silver; the vintners tested the purity of wines; the grocers looked after the chemists' shops; and the tailors were charged with the oversight of the cloth-fair in West Smithfield. Tradesmen who were convicted of fraud in any department of business were severely punished. The butcher that sold bad meat had to stand in the pillory, and have the putrid meat burned under his nose. Bakers who stole their masters' dough had also to stand in public penance with the dough hung round their necks; and drapers who were found selling shoddy blankets, in which

cow-hair was mixed with the wool, had all their stock promptly burned up. From the time of Edward III. onwards, every trade of any importance was organised into a company; and though the power of these companies was enormous and often tyrannously exerted, yet it is owing to their wise despotism that London long continued to be the first industrial, as well as the first commercial, city in the kingdom.

(i) The **Plague** came to London again in 1305, and made terrible ravages. The chief effect of this visitation was the erection of a large number of small churches and chapels, in which prayer could be offered up for the dead. 'Some of the conventual churches and the noble spire of **St. Paul's** must have been very conspicuous among the smaller edifices. The aspect of old London in the later years of Edward III., in fact, from what we know, was very fine. No doubt, as in the case of so many modern cities on the Continent and in the East, the best view was from the outside, where the narrow winding lanes, the broken pavement, the filth and ruin were not apparent. . . . The long red-tiled roofs of the companies' halls were contrasted with the shingle[1] or lead-covered spires of the churches which rose between, while here and there a grim bastion of the city wall, or one of the gates, crowned by vanes and banners alternating with the heads of Scottish marauders, showed high and square.'—LOFTIE.

(ii) The accession of Edward III. was marked by an extension of the boundaries of the city. The city jurisdiction was extended over **Southwark,** which the King granted for a rent of £10 a year. The step was very necessary, as the 'village,' as it was then called, had become the refuge of felons and malefactors of every description, who were there secure from arrest.

(iii) In the year 1313 the power of the Knights Templar fell, and their house, the **Temple,** behind Fleet Street, was converted into a residence for law-students. In 1371 the great house of the **Carthusians,** which has been alluded to in the last chapter, was founded.

5. **Richard II.**—The history of Richard's reign, in so far as it concerns London, consists of a long-protracted dispute between the **companies** and the **common people,** of the occu-

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[1] Shingles are wooden tiles, still used for roofing in Norway and North America.

pation of the city by **Wat the Tiler** and the men of Kent, and of the time when Richard, dispensing with Parliament and reigning as an absolute sovereign, began to alienate the affections of the Londoners by illegal extortions of money. As has been said before, the companies reigned supreme in London They claimed the right, and exercised it too, of controlling all the city elections, and the people had not even the privilege of choosing the aldermen who were supposed to represent them. One poor wretch, John Constantyn, a shoemaker by trade, attempted to raise a resistance amongst the lower classes against the power of the companies. He put up the shutters of his shop, and called the people to a public meeting. The mayor and sheriffs instantly sallied out, arrested the contumacious shoemaker, and, haling him to the Guildhall, there and then cut off his head. These were not times when the rights of the individual were scrupulously respected. In 1381 came the uprising of the peasants under Wat the Tiler and Jack Straw, and the London commons took sides with the down-trodden peasants in their attempt to secure the ordinary rights of men.

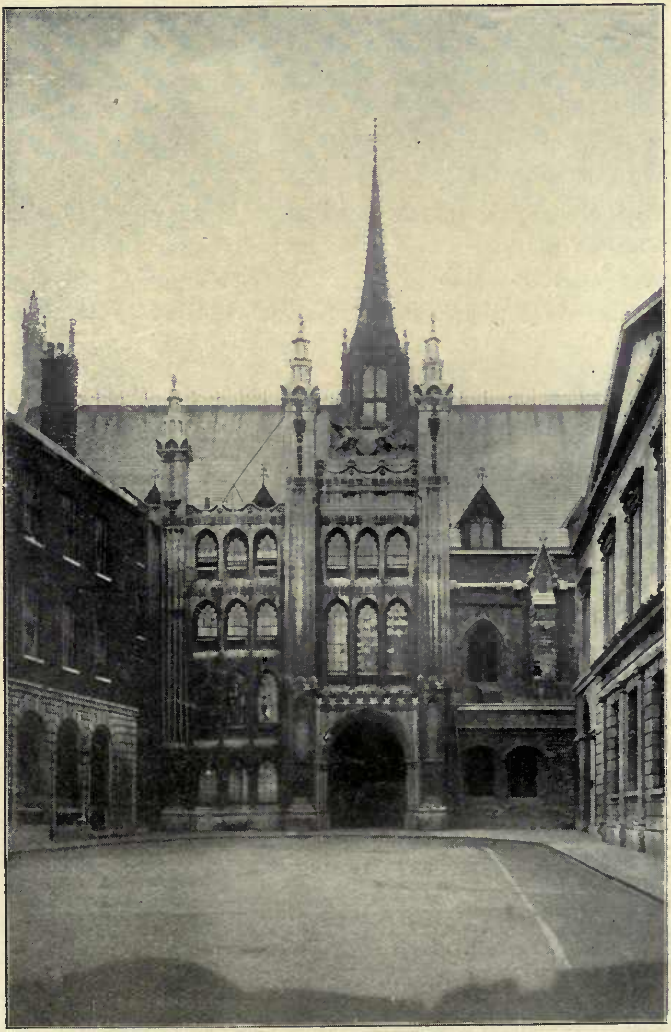
6. Richard might have learnt from this serious revolt on the part of poor peasants to respect the liberties of so rich and powerful a city as London, but the lesson was lost on him. He began to take toll of every boat or ship that passed the Tower; he put a tax on everything that was brought in from the country through the city gates, and even went so far as to lock up the mayor in Windsor Castle. For all this he had his reward. He effectually turned the hearts of the citizens against himself; and, when Henry Bolingbroke appeared to claim the crown, London received him with open arms. Richard returned again to London as Henry's prisoner;

and the last sight the people had of him was when his body was laid out in state in St. Paul's Cathedral, 'that they might believe for certain that he was dead.'

(i) In 1377, the first year of Richard's reign, the east coast of England and the shipping thereon were being harried by a fleet of Scottish pirates, who also beset the mouth of the Thames. **Sir John Philpot**, an alderman and a wealthy merchant—his name is still commemorated by **Philpot Lane** off Fenchurch Street, where his house once stood—gathered together a company of a thousand men and ships, to do the work which a royal fleet ought to have done. He put to sea, and, falling in with the Scots fleet, brought back the marauders in triumph to the Thames.

(ii) Two other great men lived in King Richard's reign—**Geoffrey Chaucer**, the first great English poet, and **Richard Whittington**, the hero (though none the less a real person) of the nursery-book tales, and four times, not thrice, mayor of London town.

7. **London under the York and Lancaster Kings.**—It was London that put **Henry IV.** on the throne, and it was London who kept him there. When one of the numerous conspiracies against the King was discovered, the Lord Mayor said to him, 'Sire, King we have made you: King we will keep you.' The events of this reign are few. It was marked, for the people of London at all events, by the rise of the Lollards, by another visitation of the Plague in 1406, and by the building of the **Guildhall** in the year 1411. The Guildhall, the walls of which still stand partly as they were then built, was placed a little to the north of the Cheap, not far from the street called Aldermanbury, which was the original site of the Aldermen's Meeting-house—the first Guildhall. The whole reign of Henry IV. was an anxious one. There were no foreign wars to distract the attention of the people, and plots were being constantly hatched against the life and authority of the King. The exhibition of traitors' heads on the battlements of the Bridge became a common sight; and



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now for the first time London witnessed the spectacle of men being burned to death for their religious opinions. **William Sawtre**, curate of St. Osyth's Church, which once stood in St. Osyth's, or Size Lane, was the first to suffer in this way for the 'obstinate heresy' of Lollardism. On the accession of **Henry V.** these cruel exhibitions became more frequent, till at last the Lollards rose in desperate rebellion under the leadership of Sir John Oldcastle. Notices were posted secretly on the doors of the city churches, saying that 100,000 men were ready to take up arms in defence of their religious opinions. But the unfortunate rebels made no stand against the royal forces, who, led by the King in person, easily dispersed them. Thirty-seven poor wretches were committed to prison, some to Newgate and some to the Tower, and on the next day they were hanged in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and their bodies burnt.

8. This happened in 1414, and the next year was the year of **Agincourt.** The King came back in triumph to London, and **Richard Whittington**, who with other city magnates had made an enormous fortune during the war, entertained the King at a banquet at his own private house, for there was as yet no Mansion House for the Lord Mayor to live in. The splendour of the entertainment amazed even the King, and he was yet more amazed when Whittington produced the King's bonds to the value of £60,000 (which would be worth six times as much at the present day), and fed the fire with them. Nor were the people behindhand in doing honour to the victorious King. The houses were covered with scarlet cloth, music played at every street corner; the bells rang out a crashing welcome; and magnificent pageants met the eye at every turn. The King, when he had paid

his devotions at St. Paul's, retired to his palace at Westminster.

(i) One of the old chroniclers gives a vivid account of the burning of a Lollard, an execution at which the Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry v., was present. 'This same year (1409), there was a clerk (*i.e.* a priest) that believed not on the sacrament of the altar—that is to say God's body—which was condemned and brought into Smithfield to be burnt. And Harry, Prince of Wales, then the King's eldest son, counselled him for to forsake his heresy and hold the right way of holy Church. And the prior of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield brought the holy sacrament of God's body, with twelve torches' light before, and in this wise came to this cursed heretic: and it was asked him how he believed: and he answered that he believed well that it was hallowed bread and not God's body; and then was the tun (*i.e.* the barrel) put over him and fire kindled therein: and when the wretch felt the fire he cried mercy; and anon the prince commanded to take away the tun and to quench the fire, the which was done anon at his commandment: and then the prince asked him if he would forsake his heresy and taken him to the faith of holy Church, which if he would do, he should have his life and good enough to live by: and the cursed shrew would not, but continued forth in his heresy, wherefore he was burnt.'

(ii) In the year 1416 the lighting of London streets with lamps was made compulsory. But the regulation, both then and for many years to come, was more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

9. **London during the Wars of the Roses.**—The coming of Henry VI. to London was a sad one. The wretched little child, not three years old, was fetched from Windsor, and, says a chronicler, 'he shrieked and cried and sprang, and would not be carried further.' But his uncle brought him to St. Paul's, and there made the poor weakly baby kneel down before the high altar—a pathetic beginning to an inglorious reign. The first trouble that the vacillating and weak government of the King brought upon the city was its capture by **Jack Cade** in 1450. With a force of 40,000 Kentish men, Cade entered London without meeting any resistance,

and, riding up to London Stone, he struck it with his sword and exclaimed, 'Now is Mortimer lord of this city.' What he wanted is not clear, but, as he promised immunity from taxation to the poorer classes, they at once became of his party. His followers and the city mob plundered and burnt for three days, until by the exertions of the mayor and aldermen the rebels, who had retired to Southwark, were shut out of the city.

10. Then came the Wars of the Roses. The government of Henry was unsettled and weak, and his proud queen, Margaret of Anjou, despised the citizens and looked on them merely as providers of money. Hence it was natural that the Londoners should cleave to the House of York, and the more so because they knew that their commercial interests both at home and abroad would be best served under the rule of a strong king. Accordingly when, on the 28th of February 1461, Edward of York presented himself before the gates of London, the people welcomed him with acclamation. There was no longer room in the Cheap for a folk-mote or a public meeting; so the people met one Sunday in an open space near Clerkenwell, and on being asked if they would have the young earl for their king, they filled the air with the old shout of 'Yea! yea!' and London chose Edward IV. to be king, as it had chosen so many of his predecessors, and was to confirm the choice of many a king and queen after him.

In 1467 a commercial treaty was concluded with the Duke of Burgundy, and the city merchants took full advantage of the extensive trade that was thus opened up between England and the Low Countries. Edward himself despatched ships with a private venture of wool to Flanders. Between Bruges and London especially a brisk trade was carried on in wool, butter, cheese, tin, and coal; to London came wine from the Rhine valley, Gascony, and Spain; while great Venetian galleys discharged 'below bridge' their cargoes of silk and spices from the East, and sugar from Egypt and Sicily.

To Edward IV. belongs the credit of being the first to organise a body of registered medical practitioners, for in the first year of his reign he enacted that the members of the Barbers' Company of London should alone have the power of practising as surgeons.

11. In the fresh outbreak of hostilities brought on by Warwick the King-maker, London stood loyally by her elected king. She helped Edward to win the battle of Barnet, and beat off an attack of Thomas Neville, one of the Lancastrian leaders, who had hoped to carry London by storm, but only succeeded in burning the Aldgate. After Barnet the unfortunate Henry made his last public appearance in London. His feet tied to his horse's stirrups, he was led thrice round the pillory in the Cheap, and was then imprisoned in the Tower, where he died of melancholy, as his enemies said, but the Lancastrians hinted at poison. The day after he died his body was shown to the people in St. Paul's. 'Was any old man present,' asks Loftie, 'to recall the day when, eight and forty years before, Henry, as a little child, had kneeled in royal loneliness before the altar of the same church?'

12. Up to the day of his death, Edward IV. remained popular with the citizens of London. The merchant princes saw in him a king after their own heart, and the common people loved the general who had given their city peace after the riot and confusion of so many years of war. While the war was at its height, we are told that the streets were

patrolled every night by three aldermen, each with a guard of a thousand men. 'They marched'—so says a chronicle—'owte of Newgate, and soe up Holborne and doune Chauncery Lane and through Fletstret and in at Ludgate and through Temstret (Thames Street), and soe to the Tower of London, and soe forthe home agayne.' This went on up to seven o'clock each morning. It was no wonder London loved a king who gave them release from this nightly disturbance. With the reign of **Richard Crookback** the history of Plantagenet London finishes. Like his brother Edward, he also submitted himself to the citizens as a candidate for the kingship. The mayor, along with the chief citizens, repaired to Baynard's Castle in Blackfriars, which had been the house of Richard's father, and formally invited him to the throne.

13. **The Government of the City.**—Before we leave the historical account of Plantagenet London, it will be well to gather together what we have learnt piece by piece about the government of the city, for it is the same body which rules to-day within the boundaries of the city proper. The **Lord Mayor** is the chief-magistrate of the city, and the two **Sheriffs** are his officers; with him sits the **Court of Aldermen**, also magistrates; and the **Common Council**, the twenty-five 'discreet men' of King John's time, is an advisory body to the Mayor. There are also several other city officials, whose duties were at one time united with the office of mayor, but to whom it was found convenient to delegate certain duties which had become too numerous for one man to perform. These officials are the **Recorder** or Chief Justice, the **Chamberlain**, who is the City Treasurer, and the City **Coroner.** The Mayor is elected by the Companies; the Aldermen and the Common Council are elected by the Wards—that is, by certain

divisions in the city, which once represented the personal estates of the wealthier citizens. Thus, for instance, the Cornhill ward, the Farringdon wards, and the Bassishaw ward were the actual estates, the manors, of the three great families of the Cornhills, the Farringdons, and the Basings. An historian of London has thus summarised the development of the mayor out of the portreeve of the Saxon times: 'The portreeve, who was able to govern and keep the city account with the King, and who sought counsel from the aldermen or lords of the manor which composed his government, and beyond his aldermen from the citizens in their mote (who elected the Common Council), gradually resolves himself, as it were, into component parts. When he can no longer bear the heavy burden of the reeveship by himself, he is changed into a mayor with sheriffs; when his office is no longer to be held year after year by the same man, he again divides, and becomes mayor, chamberlain, coroner, recorder, and sheriffs.'

(i) With the Wars of the Roses the sphere of London life and London influence became greatly changed. 'The citizens of London were no longer a peculiar people, dwelling in a close-walled town, surrounded by fordless morasses and impenetrable forests. The suburbs took the citizens far into Middlesex. Southwark was directly under their governance. They lived in villas at Stepney and even at Tyburn. London had become part of England: and already the old patriotism of the citizens to their city was growing weak.'—LOFTIE.

(ii) One of the most celebrated buildings of Plantagenet London was **Crosby Hall** in Bishopsgate Street, which survived up to 1907. We may be tolerably sure that, though it was the only one left of the houses that the great merchant princes built for themselves, London contained many others equally magnificent. It was built in the year 1466 by Sir John Crosby, a sheriff and alderman, who was a member of the grocers' company, and he paid a rent for it of £11, 6s. 8d. a year. The house, built of stone and timber, was one of the most magnificent and the highest in London, and was for a time the residence of Richard III. Here it was said that he received the news of the murder of the two little princes in the Tower. Here too Ben Jonson often dined, and Shakespeare perhaps ; and Crosby Hall was the house of Henry VIII.'s wise and witty Chancellor, Sir Thomas More. This once royal palace, which in 1907 was unfortunately pulled down, was, previous to that date, used as a restaurant, in which city clerks snatched a hasty dinner.

14. **The Story of Dick Whittington.**—We most of us know the nursery story of Dick Whittington and his cat. The story runs that Whittington came up from the country a poor and friendless lad and was received into the service of a wealthy merchant; that, sick of drudgery in the city, he ran away from his employer; but that, as he rested on a green bank on the slopes of Highgate, he heard the bells of Bow Church in Cheapside, four miles away, ring out, 'Turn again, Whittington, thrice Lord Mayor of London Town!' The runaway apprentice did turn again, and came back to his master. Then the story goes on to tell how all Whittington's fellow-apprentices were allowed to have a small venture on their master's ships that traded abroad, but that Dick had nothing to send but a cat. However, he put the cat on board a ship, and the captain sailed with it to a far country. Now it so happened that the king of that country was sore plagued with rats as he sat at meat. The captain brought in the cat to the king's hall; the rats were all chased away or killed; and the king, overjoyed at being rid of the plague, gave an immense price for the cat. And so the foundation of Dick Whittington's fortune was laid.

15. That is the nursery story, and it comes very near the truth. Richard Whittington was born of a good family at Pauntley in Gloucestershire, about the year 1358. He may have been a poor lad, but he certainly was not a friendless one. For at the age of thirteen he came up to London to be apprenticed to (or, as we should say now, to enter the

office of) his cousin, Sir John Fitzwarren, who was a wealthy member of the Mercers' Company. Fitzwarren was also a merchant-adventurer, and it is therefore quite likely that Whittington really did found the beginnings of his fortune by putting a cat on board of one of his cousin's ships and having it sold in some distant country. For cats then were not the common animals that they are now, and it is not at all improbable that one might catch the fancy of some savage potentate. However that may be, Whittington began to rise steadily in the business world of London; for in 1378 his name is mentioned in the rolls of the Mercers' Company, as being one of the lowest members belonging to it. In the year 1376 Edward III. granted the Companies a charter, which forbade foreign merchants disposing of their goods by retail. This regulation must have done much to help on the rising fortunes of Whittington. For it meant that every ship, coming into the ports of Billingsgate or Queenhithe,[1] was forced to deal direct with the Companies, who alone could afford to buy goods wholesale. Whittington saw the city pass through many a stirring time. He saw Sir John Philpot sail victoriously up the Thames; he saw London in the hands of Wat Tiler and his mob; he may have been present at the burning of Sawtre, the Lollard, for he was always on the side of the wealthy aristocratic party as against the common people.

16. In 1384, the year in which the unfortunate John Constantyn was executed, he became a Common Councilman; and in 1396, as the mayor of that year died in office, Whittington was illegally appointed by Richard II. to succeed him. Next year the people, who do not seem to have

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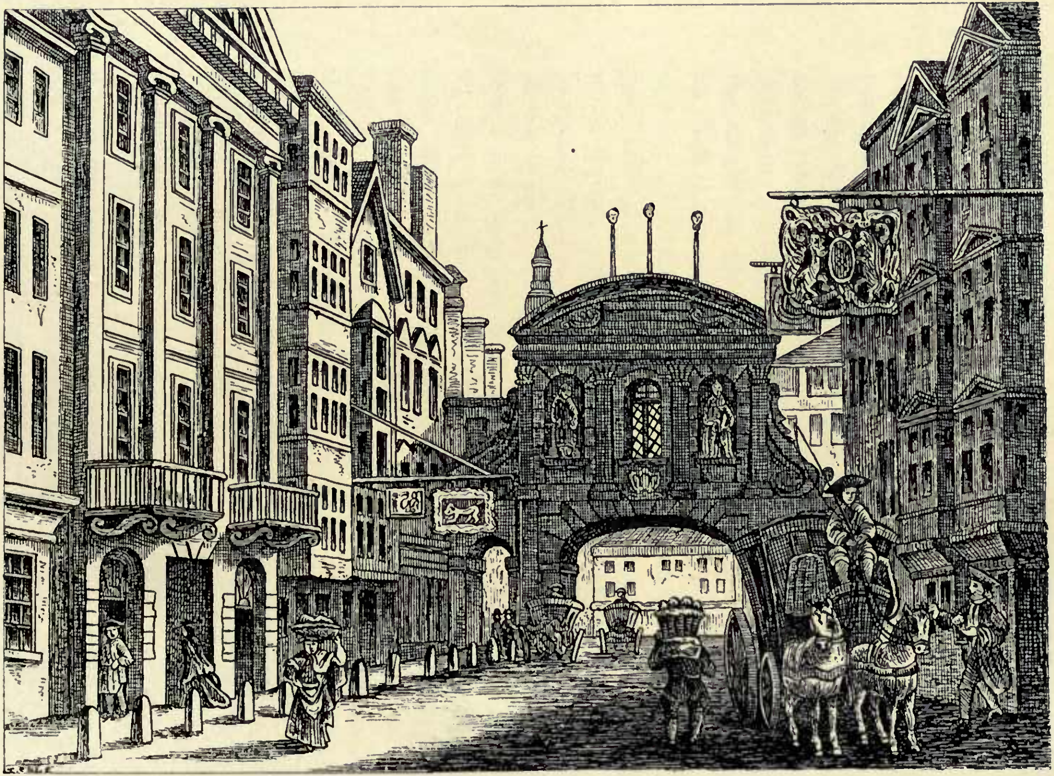
[1] The hithe, or landing-place, of Queen Matilda, wife of Stephen.



TEMPLE BAR

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objected to the royal appointment, formally confirmed him in the office. He was mayor again in 1406, in which year London was once more attacked by the Plague, and filled his fourth mayoralty in 1419. During all this time much had been done to make the life of the city a healthier one, and we may be sure that so active a magistrate as Whittington played an important part in carrying out some of these reforms. The city was lighted with lanterns; fresh water was brought in conduits, and on them Whittington placed 'drinking bosses,' or taps, so that the poor people might get a proper supply; a hall, near Leadenhall, was built for the storage of grain in famine-time; and Bakewell Hall, which once stood in Basinghall Street, was erected as a warehouse for broadcloth. In private houses glass began to be used for windows, and tiles instead of thatch; and more attention was paid to the roads, which in many places were in a shocking condition. The road, for instance, which ran from Temple Bar (the western limit of London at this period), was full of holes and bogs; the proprietors, therefore, on each side of the way were ordered to repair the roadway at their own expense. Whittington always showed himself a zealous and active magistrate, and a staunch upholder of the authority of the Companies against the lower classes. We are told that he was specially severe on brewers who brewed bad beer. After a long life of prosperity and respect, during which he married Alice Fitzwarren, his former master's daughter, he died in the year 1423.

17. That is the story of Sir Richard Whittington, and we can see for ourselves that the facts of it do not greatly differ from the nursery tale. The good works that Whittington did in his life were continued after his death, for he

left sums of money for certain charitable objects. In Upper Thames Street he founded a college for priests, called St. Michael's Paternoster Royal, and also an almshouse for thirteen poor men on the same spot, which was removed to Highgate at the beginning of the present century and is still maintained. To the Franciscans' House of Greyfriars, in Newgate Street, he gave a library; and to Whittington belongs the honour of establishing the first public library in the Guildhall.

(i) Whittington, as we have said, was particularly noted for his sternness in dealing with the brewers of bad beer. He had also some control over the many wineshops which were especially plentiful in **Eastcheap.** These were marked by a long iron rod, at the end of which was hung a green bush; hence the proverb—'Good wine needs no bush.' As in FitzStephen's day, so in Plantagenet London, the number of the wineshops gave rise to much rioting and disturbance; and it was therefore enacted that they must all be closed when the evening-bell was rung. At that time watchmen walked through the streets, with cressets full of burning tar, to see that the city regulations were properly carried out.

(ii) There were three taverns that were, by an express ordinance of Edward III., allowed to retail sweet wine, and one of these was the famous **Boar's Head** in Eastcheap, where Shakespeare in *Henry IV.* introduces Prince Henry revelling with Falstaff and his noisy crew. A humorous poem of the age, entitled *The London Lick-penny*, gives a description of the scenes in Eastcheap and the life of the London streets. Lackpenny was a poor countryman, who had come up to London for justice; but he found that the barristers and judges in Westminster Hall would not listen to his suit, unless they were bribed to do it, and Lackpenny had no gold to grease their palms with. So, disappointed of justice, he went out of Westminster Hall, when he was immediately assailed by Flemish merchants offering to sell him spectacles or fine felt hats. He pressed through the throng—in the midst of which some one stole the hood off his back,—and got to Westminster Gate. It was just dinner-time—twelve o'clock—and the keepers of the open-air cookshops pressed him to dine off fat ribs of beef and bread, with ale and wine to wash them down.

'Then unto London I did me hie,
Of all the land it beareth the prize.
"Hot peascods!" one began to cry,
"Strawberries ripe!" and "Cherries in the rise!"
And bade me come near, and buy some spice;
Pepper and saffron they gan me bede' (offer to me).

Our countryman afterwards finds himself in crowded Cheapside—he had walked from Westminster down the Strand and up Ludgate Hill; and there there were velvet, silk, and lawn for sale, and a pushing apprentice catches him by the hand, and recommends his master's 'Paris thread, the finest in the land.'

'Then full I went by London stone,
Throughout all Canwyke Street (Candlewick or Cannon Street);
Drapers much cloth offered me anon;
Then comes me one cried, "Hot sheep's feet!"
One cried, "Mackerel!" "Oysters green!" another gan greet (began to shout);
One bade me a hood to cover my head.'

He worked through the crowd, sorrowful that he had not money to spend on all these dainties, and got into Eastcheap, where again he was deafened with shouts of 'Hot pies!' and pewter pots clattering on the tables of the wineshops, and street minstrels playing to the drinkers as they sat brawling over their wine. From Eastcheap he passed up to Cornhill. There in a resetter's shop he actually saw his own hood already exposed for sale among other stolen goods.

'To buy my own hood I thought it wrong;
I knew it as well as I did my creed,
But for lack of money I could not speed.'

In Cornhill he passed another tavern, and was debating whether he might spend his last penny in a drink to solace his wounded feelings, when

'The taverner took me by the sleeve,
"Sir," saith she, "will you our wine assay?"
I answered, "That cannot much me grieve;
A penny can do no more than it may."
I drank a pint, and for it did pay.'

(iii) Towards the end of the fourteenth century a greater degree of refinement is observable in the wealthier classes' mode of life. Up to this time there had been practically only one room in a house—the great hall —in which the family dined and the servants slept on the floor among the rushes, though for the master and his wife there was a solar, or upper room, to be used as a bedroom. Now the richer people became less fond than formerly of dining almost publicly in the great hall. Nobles and wealthy merchants preferred taking their meals by themselves in rooms with chimneys; and it was accounted a mark of luxury that a man should dress or undress with a fire in his bedroom. In great houses the music of minstrels was the ordinary seasoning of meals. 'During all these meals, it is true, the sound of the viol, the "delicious things" of the minstrels, were interrupted by the crunching of the bones which the dogs were gnawing under the tables, or by the sharp cry of some ill-bred falcon; for many lords during dinner kept these favourite birds on a perch behind them.'—JUSSERAND.

18. **The Friars again.**—We have seen that the friars, on their first coming to England, went about a noble work in a noble way. 'Coarsely dressed' (as says a great French historian), 'barefoot and ill-fed, they were to go into the towns and visit the poorest and most closely populated suburbs, to seek out the lost.' But their very virtues of self-denial came in time to be their own undoing. 'Their poverty had attracted riches to them, and their self-denial power.' Their hovels became sumptuous monasteries, and rich men vied with each other in building them chapels as large and as splendid as the great cathedrals, in which it was accounted a high honour to be buried. To the church of the Franciscans in Newgate Street Edward III. made magnificent presents; Whittington gave them a library; and rich merchants beautified their church with glorious stained-glass windows. Friars no longer preached on behalf of Christ, but on behalf of their order. Their old austerity and holiness were gone; superstition and luxurious pride had taken their place. The poems of Chaucer (1340-1400) are full of references to the interested greed and the rapacity of the friars;

their trade was begging, and they shamelessly pursued it for their own advantage. A popular proverb of the day ran: 'He is a friar, therefore a liar.'

19. **The Life of London.**—'Let us try for a moment to realise the life of fourteenth century London. The houses of mud and timber were beginning to give way to stone and even brick—bounties were given to persons who built with these new materials. Upper chambers, called 'solars,' were being added to the single-roomed houses of former days. These would be used for sleeping-rooms, though we find no mention of 'parlours,'[1] or talking-rooms—*i.e.*, rooms where a rich merchant would meet his customers and discuss business,—before the fifteenth century. The 'shop' was still a booth or shed outside the door of the house itself, while the goods, which were displayed by day on the stall or hung from the windows, were stored by night in the cellar. The solar was approached by a wooden or sometimes a stone staircase from the outside. Huge shop-signs swung overhead in the streets, and were obliged to be at least nine feet above the level of the street to allow of a man on horseback riding under them in comparative safety. Even at that height it must have been an unpleasant task in a high wind. Footpaths there were none; but the road was raised by a slope from the middle downwards to the two 'kennels' (canallos or canals), into which the filth of the streets was supposed to run. A little before our period, that useful animal, the pig, had fulfilled the office now performed by the dustman; but it had recently been ordered that 'no swine be found about the streets and lanes of the city and suburbs.' If they were found any one might kill them, but the owner had the right

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[1] From the French *parler*, to talk.

of pre-emption of the carcass at fourpence. 'And he who shall wish to feed a pig must feed it at his own house.'—C. R. L. FLETCHER in *Social England.*

In the year 1472 a certain John Donne, a mercer, gave two houses, the income of which was to keep up the bells of Bow Church, and maintain a man who should ring them at nine o'clock every evening. 'The bell being usually rung somewhat late, as seemed to the young men prentices and others in Cheape, they made and set up a rhyme against the Clarke, as followeth :—

Clarke of the Bow-bell, with the yellow locks,
For thy late ringing thy head shall have knocks.

Whereunto the Clarke, replying, wrote :—

Children of Cheape, hold you all still ;
For you shall have Bow-bell rung at your will.'

STOW.

CHAPTER VIII

TUDOR LONDON

1. **Introductory.**—With the advent of the Tudor dynasty England, and London with England, entered on a new life. The Wars of the Roses had crushed the power of the barons; the Church, by this time hopelessly corrupt, was tottering to its fall; the commons, deprived of their natural leaders, the barons, had neither the power nor the inclination to make a stand against a strong exercise of royal authority. England was for the time like a ship without a helmsman, till the Tudor sovereigns stepped to the rudder and guided the vessel with a strong, firm hand. But in their rule they brooked no interference. The Tudors were dictators; and the nation, as long as the King did not ask for money, allowed him to do very much as he liked. But even more than the strong personal rule of the Tudors, there were other powers and influences which gave an immense stimulus to the commercial and industrial life of England. The end of the fifteenth century saw the 'New Learning' come into the country; it was the age of printing, for by the year 1477 Caxton had printed the first book in England; and it was the age of nautical discovery. New ideas sprung up in the minds of Englishmen, new worlds were opened for commerce, our Colonial Empire was founded, and with all these things

there rose in England 'a new, important, wealthy, thoughtful, and vigorous middle-class.' Now, for the first time in England, it was no longer blue blood but wealth that made the gentleman.

In the year 1523 a rhyme emblematic of the general progress of the country was sung:—

'Turkeys, hops, reformation, and beer,
Came into England all in one year.'

2. **London from Henry VII. to Edward VI.**—Six days after the battle of Bosworth had been fought, Henry VII. entered London in triumph, and some months later had himself crowned in due form at Westminster. His entry into the city was marked by the first outbreak of a disease called the **'sweating sickness,'** imported probably by the foreign troops that accompanied the King. It attacked the richer classes in particular, and within a month London saw four different mayors sitting at the Guildhall. Henry's intercourse with the citizens was not extensive. He surprised them at first by borrowing from the Lombard bankers a small sum of money and then repaying the debt, but soon after turned their surprised delight into disgust by pursuing towards the wealthier citizens a systematic course of extortion. Money was Henry's god, and he got it out of nearly every one and anyhow. Even some of Perkin Warbeck's wretched adherents, when they were captured at the end of the rebellion, had to pay a fine of two or three shillings each before they were restored to freedom. London was again attacked under this reign by some Cornish rebels under Lord Audley, who threatened the city from Blackheath. The King in person led the citizens against the disorderly mob of insurgents, and by the aid of a train of artillery they were easily dispersed.

3. **The pulling down of the Religious Houses.**—The reign of Henry VII. contains few events that directly affected the development or life of London; but nearly every street showed traces of the destructive handiwork of his son. We can pass over the splendid pageant on the occasion of Henry the Eighth's marriage to the Princess Katharine, when Goldsmiths' Row at the western end of Cheapside was all hung with gold brocade; over the beheading of the two detested extortioners, Empson and Dudley, and over the tragic farce of the divorce of Katharine, when the Cardinals, Wolsey and Campeggio, sat in Blackfriars Hall to help the King get rid of his unfortunate Queen. The divorce took place in 1533; but two years before that date, the work that was to transform London had already begun. Henry had determined on the **suppression of the monasteries**, and the work, once resolved on, proceeded with furious rapidity and zeal.

Plantagenet London was a forest of spires and towers, and one-third of the whole area of the city was covered with noble churches and splendid priories. The destructive hands of the reformers, directed partly by hatred and contempt of the now thoroughly corrupt and luxurious religious orders, and partly through envy of their wealth, left London a city of ruins. In the one year of 1538 the great houses of the Black, White, and Grey Friars, and that of the Carthusian Monks of the Charterhouse all fell. Some of the buildings were blown up with gunpowder; others, that were too solidly built to be destroyed by any means, were degraded by being turned into warehouses; the stones of many a glorious church were taken to build pig-styes; and the marble tombstones of buried kings and queens, of great nobles, and of merchant-princes, were either wantonly destroyed or allowed to crumble into ruins. In addition to the four religious foundations mentioned above, the suppression of the monasteries left vacant immensely valuable plots of land in Smithfield, where the priory of Bartholomew stood, at St. Martin's-le-Grand, at Austin Friars, and at Crutched Friars (the friars that wore a crutch or cross on their dress), in the Minories, where there was a convent of Minoress nuns, and in Aldgate and Bishopsgate, where stood two stately churches. All these magnificent and costly buildings were torn ruthlessly down, for the name of monks and friars had become offensive in the nostrils of all good men. Some of the monks' houses, however, at the time of the suppression, were still doing their duty as almshouses and hospitals; and, when the monks were turned out of doors, the sick and the poor were turned out with them. The citizens had now thrown on their hands the leprous from St. Thomas's in Southwark, the lame of St. Giles's in Cripplegate, and the blind of Elsing 'Spital or Hospital, which once stood in London Wall. Much misery must have followed the casting of the poor sick people on the world or on the charity of private individuals, and the citizens found it too heavy a burden for them to bear. They therefore petitioned successfully that **St. Mary 'Spital** in Spitalfields (Hospital Fields), **St. Bartholomew's** and **St. Thomas's** (which was removed to Lambeth, opposite the Houses of Parliament in 1870), should be given back to them as hospitals, and the last two of these remain hospitals to this day. Another famous hospital was granted to the citizens in 1547, the last year of Henry's reign. This was the lunatic asylum dedicated to St. Mary of Bethlehem, which became corrupted into **Bedlam**. It was founded in 1246 just outside the Bishopsgate, but was removed to Moorfields in 1675, where it remained a public exhibition of horror till 1814. The modern Bedlam now stands in St. George's Fields, Lambeth.

The **punishments** of this time were, as usual, appropriately grotesque and at the same time horribly severe. One Machyn, who wrote a diary from 1550 to 1563, describes the punishment of a woman, who kept a brandy shop in Aldersgate Street, for gross cruelty to a maidservant. The offender had nearly killed her servant by scraping her with a card, 'such as one doth card wool withal,' and with which 'she left butt lytyll skyn of her.' For this offence, in April 1552, on Easter Eve, she was ridden through London in a cart; above the cart there was set a banner with a picture of her cruelty; and round her neck was hung the instrument with which she committed the outrage. Finally she was set down at her house-door, and beadles made proclamation of her shameful acts to a hooting mob. Idle girls and disorderly apprentices were punished with public whipping, a post being set up in Cheap for that purpose. When Lady Jane Grey claimed the crown, a potman, in a tavern at Ludgate, spoke slightingly of her title. For this his ears were nailed to the pillory, and afterwards 'clean cut off.'

4. The first years of Edward the Sixth's reign were taken up in arranging for the superintendence and endowment of these hospitals; and in the year 1552 the Grey Friars' Monastery in Newgate Street was repaired and formally erected into **Christ's Hospital**,[1] or, as it is commonly known now, the Blue Coat School; so called from the dress worn by the boys, which is of the same age as the foundation of the charity. Edward did little more for the city except to present it with **Bridewell**, which had been an occasional residence for the English kings ever since the time of Henry III., and which had been rebuilt in great splendour as a royal palace by his father. It now became a workhouse for the poor and a house of correction for disorderly and idle persons, 'for the rioter that consumeth all, and for the vagabond that will abide in no place.' It stood near the

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[1] Removed in 1902 to West Horsham, Sussex.

bank of the Thames close to Blackfriars, and continued to be used as a prison till 1864, when it was pulled down.

> 'Thus
> Fortune can toss the world; a Prince's Court
> Is thus a prison now.'

(i) During the whole reign of Henry VIII., the **plague** was in London nearly every year. It singled out for special attack the poorer classes, because, among other reasons, they lived sluttishly, ate and drank too much, and recklessly exposed themselves to infection. Henry VIII., fearful for the safety of his own person, devised strict measures of quarantine. Infected houses were marked with wisps of straw, all the inmates were kept indoors, or let out on necessary business only, on condition that they bore in their hands a white rod for forty days. The kennels were thoroughly flushed with water thrice a week, and stray dogs and cats were destroyed as being likely carriers of infection. Also female searchers—two 'discreet women' from every parish in London—were sworn in at Bow Church in Cheapside, to investigate every death, and report whether it was due to the plague or not. Malignant typhus-fever, too, was very common; men called it the 'gaol-fever,' for it carried off the poor prisoners, confined in the noisome cells of Newgate and the Queen's Bench prison of Southwark, by scores. There was indeed plenty of work for the newly founded hospitals of St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew.

(ii) King Edward, in the year 1550, sold to London the manor of **Southwark** for £647, 2s. 1d. London had already a certain jurisdiction over the Borough (as Southwark is often called), for which a rent of £10 a year was paid; but now this suburb was formally enrolled as part of the city, and styled the **Bridge Ward Without.** A memorial of old Southwark still survives, and that is the church of the priory of St. Mary Overy, now called **St. Saviour's**, which stands near the end of London Bridge. In this famous old church (which has been only partially restored) there lies buried **Edmond Shakespeare**, the brother of the great William. Southwark indeed has many memories of **Shakespeare.** He owned a house called the Boar's Head, in the High Street, near St. Saviour's Church. Messrs. Barclay and Perkins' brewery covers the site of Shakespeare's theatre, the **Globe**, an octagonal building that looked something like a martello tower; while near the present Falcon Dock there once stood the **Falcon Tavern**, which is said to have been patronised by Shakespeare and his company.

5. **The Reign of Mary.**—Edward VI. died with a prayer on his lips that England might be saved from Popery, but the five years of Queen Mary's reign caused his prayer to remain unanswered. Before Mary's accession, the **Lady Jane Grey** had been received as Queen at the Tower; but the mayor and the chief citizens of London, whose fathers had told them of the miseries of a war of succession, and who detested the arrogant, shifty Lord Protector Northumberland (the father-in-law of Lady Jane Grey) would have none of her, and formally proclaimed Mary as their Queen in the market-place of Cheap. No doubt London was beginning to suffer a little from reaction, and was weary of the excesses of the Protestant reformers, and was therefore glad to receive once more a queen of the old faith. The citizens met Queen Mary at the Aldgate, and brought her in great state to the Tower, amidst shouts of 'God save her Grace!' and with the crafts in their liveries lining the streets. But her popularity did not last long. Her own chaplain, Bourne, while preaching before the Lord Mayor, was pulled out of his pulpit, and a dagger was flung in his face. Mary was married to Philip of Spain in 1564, and out of the dissatisfaction of the people at this marriage arose Wyatt's rebellion. Wyatt first appeared before Southwark, then marched away westward to cross the river at Kingston, and passed unimpeded through Westminster, Whitehall, and Fleet Street, to Ludgate. There, one Harris, a merchant-taylor of Watling Street, shut the gates against him. The London militia 'bands,' which had now got a fixed uniform, were called out; Wyatt was captured; and his 'daggletails,' as the loyalists called the rebels, who were covered with mud after a long night-march over the miry roads, were dispersed all over the suburbs. It

is worth while noticing how easily Wyatt penetrated to what is now nearly the heart of London: this shows us the very small importance attached at this date to the districts outside the wall. The City was London then, and its safety and its privileges, were jealously guarded; what happened to the outskirts was no great concern.

Wyatt's rebellion precipitated the fate of the gentle Lady Jane Grey and her young husband. They were beheaded on the 12th of February, and Wyatt a month later—all on Tower Hill. Many of Wyatt's wretched adherents suffered too; and 'on that same day was made at every gate in London a new pair of gallows—two pair in Cheapside, two pair in Fleet Street, and one pair in Holborn.'

6. So the miserable business ended, and the arrival of Philip and Cardinal Pole in London was the signal for the **Marian persecutions** to begin. Altogether two hundred and seventy-seven persons suffered death by burning in London alone. Gangs of 'heretics' were led roped together through Cheapside towards the stake in Smithfield, and the mob shouted Amen! to the last prayers of the victims. Rogers, a clergyman, besought permission to bid his wife farewell, but Bishop Gardiner savagely refused him on the ground that priests have no wives. It was more than could be borne: Smithfield had become a human shambles; and only the death of the unhappy wife and bigoted Queen saved England from a general uprising.

7. **London under Elizabeth.**—Before we enter upon the topography and life of Elizabethan London, we may first briefly review such historical events of the Virgin Queen's reign as are directly connected with the City. Elizabeth's long reign commenced with the usual progress through the

streets, which was followed next year by a solemn procession on the occasion of her coronation at Westminster Abbey. Every street-corner and gate was decorated; at the door of St. Peter's Church, which once stood in Cheapside, the Queen was presented with a Bible in English (a man might have gone to the stake for such a possession in Mary's reign); she stopped her chariot whenever she saw 'any simple body offer to speak' to her; and a sprig of rosemary, which was thrown into her carriage at Fleet Bridge, 'was seen in her chariot till her Grace came to Westminster.' Elizabeth was a strong sovereign, and was therefore popular in the City. The Londoners, too, never forgot that her great-grandfather, Sir Geoffrey Boleyn, had been Mayor of London just a hundred years ago. Under this, the second greatest of English queens, trade flourished as it had never flourished before, and in the year 1571 the **Royal Exchange** was opened. Elizabeth was punctual in the payment of all Crown debts; she abolished all benevolences—'amicable loans,' as her father called them—and other such illegal extortions, and reformed the coinage. The ruling merchants of the city, the prosperous tradesmen, and the well-to-do artisans or craftsmen, were thus all on her side; and in 1586 the whole city was illuminated, bonfires blazed at every corner, and all the bells were set a-ringing, because the conspiracy of Babington against the life of the Queen had been discovered, and because the hapless Mary Stuart had been condemned.

8. Then came the threatening shadow of the Armada. Elizabeth asked the City for fifteen ships and five thousand men. London gave her double what she asked, and the militia train-bands of the city paraded every evening in the Artillery Ground in Spitalfields. With that vast outburst of

loyalty, which was excited in London by the scare of the Armada, the direct connection of Elizabeth with the City closes. At her death the signs of grief were as marked and genuine as had been the affection of the Londoners towards her in her life. As her funeral passed along to Westminster, there was, says a contemporary chronicler, 'such a general sighing, groaning, and weeping, as the like hath not been seen or known in the memory of man, neither doth any history mention any people, time, or state, to make like lamentation for the death of their sovereign.'

9. **The Life and Streets of Elizabethan London.**—We have now arrived at a period when fairly accurate maps exist, which give us a general idea of the lie and direction of the London streets. As far as the streets go, London—that is the City proper—still remains very much the same; for, though the Great Fire of 1666 destroyed the greater part of the City, it could never destroy the line of a street. The maps of the time still show us London surrounded with a wall, as Augusta was a thousand years before. But outside the wall the 'Greater London' has begun to spring up, and oddly enough the houses outside the wall were considered the 'slums' of the day—'the country roads were pestered with filthy cottages.' A proclamation of Elizabeth in the year 1580 vainly endeavoured to check this natural increase, by enacting that no new houses were to be built within a radius of three miles from the city walls. The proclamation stated that this step was necessary, because people, miserably poor, were in the habit of building filthy little mean hovels, which became nests of rogues and nurseries for spreading the plague. Every now and then an energetic city official would cause one of these illegally built houses to be pulled down as a warning to others. At the beginning of the seventeenth century we

hear of one such tenement-house, which contained eleven married couples and fifteen single persons.

10. But for all that London continued to grow. At this time Piccadilly[1] was the 'way to Reading,' and Tyburn Road, which we know as Oxford Street, the 'way to Uxbridge.' The Moorfields were drained, and laid out in walks for the citizens, while Holborn and Bloomsbury were recommended to invalids and convalescents for change of air. The Strand, from the south side of which splendid houses sloped down to the river, was little used as a thoroughfare. The great highway of the Londoners was the Thames, and the watermen's wherries were the cabs. The Queen travelled from Whitehall to her Palace at Greenwich in the royal barge, and her suite followed her in boats decked out with silken flags and streamers. The busy merchant called a wherry as his business took him from wharf to wharf, and the pleasure-seekers crossed by boat to the theatres and bear-pits in Bankside, Southwark. The Thames supported a population that was all its own, and from the thousands of watermen that earned their living out of that 'silent highway,' were drawn many of those sailors who faced and shattered the naval power of Spain. Indeed, there was but little wheeled traffic even in the City itself, and London Bridge was not much used by foot-passengers. Strings of pack-horses defiled slowly through the streets, and the number of carts was restricted to 420. North of the Wall, Islington, Hoxton, and Clerkenwell were nothing more than outlying villages. But along the river-bank, the great antiquary Stow notes that a more or less continuous line of houses spread to Poplar, and even to Blackwall; and there was a similar line

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[1] PICCADILLY gets its name from Piccadilla Hall, a shop for the sale of piccadillas, or turn-over collars.

westwards, from Temple Bar to Westminster. Broadly speaking, one may say that in those days the whole of the present County of London was open fields. Shaftesbury Avenue was a green meadow; at King's Cross a man might look on the smoke of London some distance away; and north of Finsbury lay the farms that supplied the town with agricultural produce.

11. The City itself was not overcrowded with buildings. The streets were broad and spacious; there were gardens here and there (strawberry-beds, for instance, in Holborn); and there was a smell of flowers and May all about. The Thames still ran comparatively sweet and clear, and in 1582 the first regular water-supply was drawn from it. An ingenious Dutchman erected some pumping apparatus on one of the jutting-out piers of London Bridge, and forced water up as far as Gracechurch Street. Later on, both Cheapside, Fleet Street, and the houses round St. Paul's were supplied with water in the same way.

12. **The Prentices.**—Under the strong, firm hand of Elizabeth the internal life of the City was, on the whole, an orderly one. There was a constant danger, however, to the public peace in the turbulence of the prentices. These lads (dressed exactly as the Blue-Coat boys are dressed to-day) would rush out of their shops on the smallest provocation, or whenever any cause for disturbance was forward, shouting out, 'Prentices! Prentices! Clubs! Clubs!' Thus, in 1517, during the reign of Henry VIII., a great riot arose against the foreigners domiciled in London. Many of the houses of the foreign artisans and traders were sacked, and the prentices of the City picked quarrels with the strangers in the streets. 'Some they smote and buffeted, and some they threw into

the gutters that were thick with filth. For this attack on harmless strangers, the Lord Mayor committed the ringleaders of the riot to Newgate, and further made proclamation that no one should stir out of his house after nine o'clock for that evening. But the news of the order did not get round in time, and a certain alderman found two young men fencing in the street after the forbidden hour, and a crowd watching them. The alderman told the fencers to leave off, and, because one of them asked him why, he attempted to arrest him. Then the riot began afresh. Newgate was taken, and the offscourings of the gaol let loose upon the streets. For this outrage wholesale arrests were made, and the worst of the rioters had to stand their trial. Eleven people were hanged, and 400 prentices were commanded to appear for pardon before the King at the Guildhall, with halters round their necks. This happened on what the Londoners afterwards came to remember as **Evil May-day.** Yet, even with this recollection before them, the prentices continued in their riotous ways, and Elizabeth had to enact that any lad, found guilty before a Justice of the Peace of such disorder, should be hanged forthwith.

13. **London Shops.**—The Regent Street—the fashionable shopping street — of Elizabethan London was **Cheapside.** This was at that time a broad, paved street, with a number of fine houses on its southern side, which was known as Goldsmiths' Row.' One of the most fashionable lounging places of the time was 'Paul's Walk,' the nave of St. Paul's Cathedral, where there was a sanctuary [1] for debtors. There, too, the fashionable tailor would attend to take the measure-

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[1] A Sanctuary was a place—not necessarily a church—where all debtors were secure from arrest.

ments of his customers. Another sanctuary for debtors, and a refuge for outcasts, bullies, and rogues of all descriptions, was **Whitefriars**, or **Alsatia** as it came to be called. Each trade still occupied its own quarter of the town: the haberdashers and mercers had their shops on London Bridge, still the only bridge over the Thames; the grocers and druggists lived in Bucklersbury; the taverners and restaurant-keepers in Eastcheap; the booksellers in St. Paul's Churchyard. Hardly any of the shops, except the goldsmiths', had glass windows, so that there was little display of goods.

14. A common sight in the streets was the various instruments of punishment. There stood a pillory in Cheap and in Cornhill, where there were also a set of stocks and a cage; by Thames-side could be seen the ducking-stools for scolding women; and in 1598 the heads of thirty traitors adorned one of the towers of London Bridge. In the Cheap, too, stood the Standard, a large fountain whence was drawn the water brought by conduit from the brook Tyburn. Near it, in 1450, Jack Cade, Captain of the Kentish rebels, beheaded Lord Saye.

London was savage in its punishments, but there was plenty of merriment too. Every tavern had its fiddler, there were bands in the theatres, and street ballad-singers were common and popular. A writer in 1598 speaks of the English as 'vastly fond of great noises that fill the ear, such as the firing of cannon, drums, and the ringing of bells; so that in London it is common for a number of them, that have got a glass in their heads, to go into some belfry and ring the bells for hours together for the sake of exercise.'

15. **Amusements.**—On **May-day** all the citizens went a-maying, and walked out in the morning to the sweet meadows and green woods, 'there to rejoice their spirits, with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds, praising God in their kind.' Thus each

parish had its **Maypole**, which the young men and maidens decked with flowers and danced round all the afternoon, singing—

'Mighty Flora, goddess of fresh flowers,
Which clothèd hath the soil in lusty green,
Made buds to spring, by her sweet showers,
By influence of the sunné-sheen.'

Towards evening the jollity of the day was brought to an end by stageplays and bonfires in the streets. The principal city Maypole was erected opposite the church of **St. Andrew Undershaft**, in Aldgate Ward. The tall shaft, when not in use, lay upon a row of hooks over the house-doors of **Shaft Alley**. It was last used on Evil May-day, in the year 1517, and hung for thirty-two years till it was sawn in pieces and burnt by a mob in 1549.

For those who were fond of sight-seeing, there was the view of London from the top of St. Paul's, to be had on payment of one penny. At the Tower there was maintained, at the Queen's expense, a small menagerie, including a lion, a tiger, a lynx, a porcupine, a wolf, and an eagle. Every evening there was a beautiful choral service at St. Paul's, where a grand organ was played, accompanied by other instruments.

(i) The **population** of London and suburbs in Elizabethan times was about 125,000, not much larger than Brighton is to-day. Compare this with the present population of 'Greater London'—over 6,000,000.

(ii) The style of building houses altered considerably, as space in the city became more valuable. The houses were built of plaster and timber in four or five storeys, with rich carving down the front. There was no great hall, and the rooms became more numerous and smaller. Each storey generally projected beyond the one below; the gables were high and pointed; and the windows were latticed with tiny diamond-shaped panes of glass. Many fashionable houses were still to be found in the city, especially in the neighbourhood of Mark Lane and Fenchurch Street—as for instance that of Sir Francis Walsingham (one of the Queen's great ministers), and one of Essex's houses in Seething Lane. A specimen of an Elizabethan house is still standing in Holborn, forming the street-front of Staple Inn.

(iii) A curious note occurs in Stow's book on London (1598), touching the fierce eagerness with which Londoners defended their rights even outside their walls, in the districts which were known as the city 'Liberties.' It seems that in the 'townes about London,' Islington, Hoxton, Shoreditch, and others, certain people had been enclosing commons with hedges and ditches. The result was that 'neither the young men of the city might shoot, nor the ancient persons walk for their pleasures in those fields.' The young men had their bows and arrows taken from them, and other people were warned not to trespass off the highways. The Londoners would not stand this. 'A great number of the city assembled themselves in a morning, and a Turner in a fool's coat came crying through the city, Shovels and spades! Shovels and spades!' The people sallied out in a body, and in a short space the hedges were down and the ditches filled up. The King's council—the disturbance happened in the sixth year of Henry the Eighth's reign—did not venture to take official notice of it, though they cautioned the mayor to see that the like did not occur again; but those fields were never hedged afterwards.

16. **London Theatres.**—Before the reign of Queen Elizabeth, plays and theatres, as we know them to-day, were unknown to the Londoners. With acting of certain kinds, London was quite familiar. Every fair had its Merry-Andrews and tumblers; and there were frequent performances of Mystery Plays, which portrayed various events in sacred history. A Mystery Play is still acted, once in every ten years, in a little German village, called Ober-Ammergau, where the peasants, on an open stage, play the closing scenes of the life of Christ. People come from all over the world to witness the sublime acting of these village players; but to the Londoner of the Middle Ages, the Mystery Play (which was about all the Sunday-school he ever had) was quite a familiar spectacle, and it was a lifelike method of teaching a

people that could not read. In Clerkenwell, in the year 1409, there was acted a 'mystery,' depicting the creation of the world, which lasted for eight days. Besides these scriptural plays, there were pageants, which corresponded more or less to what we now call *tableaux vivants*, and masques, a succession of gorgeous scenes, in which the actors performed some allegorical subject.

17. All these things led up to the theatre, and the first regular playhouse erected in London was built in the year 1570, in Shoreditch, and was called the '**Theatre.**' There was much opposition at first to the founding of the playhouses. The city authorities objected to them because they brought crowds of people together, and thus tended to spread the plague; and the Puritans did not like them on religious grounds. It was therefore enacted that no theatre should be built within the city walls, and that performances should only take place when the plague death-rate was less than fifty a week. The Puritan party disliked them on account of the irreligion they seemed to encourage; for Sunday was at first the only day on which they were licensed to perform. Church congregations near the theatre in Shoreditch complained that they were disturbed at service by the noise of the big drum which summoned the audience to the play. However, playgoing very soon became popular: twenty of Shakespeare's dramas were acted before the Queen; and at the beginning of the seventeenth century we hear of a ship-captain who, on a voyage to the Indies, allowed his crew to play *Richard II.* and *Hamlet*, 'to keep his people from idleness, unlawful games, or sleep.'

18. Other playhouses followed the theatre in Shoreditch,—the **Curtain** in the same place, and the **Blackfriars Theatre**

on the site of the old Dominican monastery. But the two most famous were the **Rose** and the **Globe**, in Bankside, Southwark. At both of these houses Shakespeare played; but his name and his plays are chiefly connected with the Globe. Southwark was largely given over to amusements; besides the theatres, the Londoners visited the Borough to see bulls and bears baited in Paris Garden, near the Globe. A noted breed of bull-dogs was kept there, and one of the bears, Sackerson, was famous enough to be spoken of by name in Shakespeare's play of the *Merry Wives of Windsor.* The other outdoor sports of the age were cruel. We hear of a pony baited by dogs with a monkey on his back; and another sport was called 'whipping the blind bear': the bear was tied to a stake and whipped till the blood ran down his shoulders.

The theatre was octagonal in shape outside, but inside it was circular. The stage stretched from the back of the house out into the pit, which was then called the 'yarde.' The admission to the yarde only cost twopence, and there were no seats in it. Above the yarde and round the house ran three galleries; in the top two there was standing room only, but the bottom tier was divided into rooms or boxes, the price for which was sixpence each person. Certain privileged playgoers, noblemen, and gentlemen, were admitted to the stage itself; and there they sat or lay about, cracking nuts, sucking oranges, and smoking tobacco (which at that time cost 18s. an ounce, or threepence the pipeful). At the back of the stage there was a raised platform, which served the players for a wall, castle, or balcony, as the case might be. Of scenery there was little or none, and the ordinary dresses of the Elizabethan age were made to do duty for those of every country and every time. Very often a board was hung up in the front of the stage, with a label on it saying, 'This is a wood,' or, 'Here is a farmyard,' and the like.

19. **Trade and Sir Thomas Gresham.**—Under the reign of Queen Elizabeth the commerce of England in general, and of London in particular, became for the first time of world-wide

importance and world-wide scope. It came to be, as an historian says, 'no longer riparian but oceanic.' That is to say: men no longer crept about the shores of inland seas, but boldly launched forth upon the great waterways of the ocean. All the sovereigns of the Tudor dynasty had zealously encouraged and fostered trade. Thus Henry VII. had concluded with the Duke of Burgundy, who was the ruler of Flanders, a treaty known as the Magnus Intercursus, by which the Duke undertook to encourage the import of English wool into the great manufacturing towns of Flanders. But Elizabeth did more than any one to set London at the head of the seaports of the world, and with her efforts in this direction the name of **Sir Thomas Gresham** is inseparably connected. Before we learn what that great citizen did for the trade of London, we must first notice the three chief causes that contributed to making London what it is to-day—the first seaport in the world. These were briefly: the depriving of the Hanseatic Merchants of the Steelyard of most of their important privileges, which happened in the reign of Edward VI.; the sack of Antwerp by the Spaniards in 1576; and the discovery of new routes to India, and the revelation of the New World.

20. The monopoly of these Steelyard merchants had almost paralysed English commerce; but now that their exclusive privileges of export were taken from them, independent English trade, conducted by Englishmen, began to have freer scope. The fall of Antwerp, and the ruin of the two prosperous manufacturing towns near it, Bruges and Ghent, gave to London the supremacy in the carrying trade, a supremacy which she has maintained ever since. Furthermore, a large number of Flemish wool-workers, driven from

the country by the religious wars, came over for refuge to England, and so greatly improved the processes of woollen manufacture that, while in the fifteenth century London's chief export was wool, in the beginning of the sixteenth it was cloth. But the greatest stimulus to English trade was given by the discovery of new lands and new routes. In the year 1492 Columbus had discovered America; in 1497 Vasco da Gama had opened the road round the Cape of Good Hope to India; and a little before, Cabot had sailed from Bristol, then the second city in the kingdom, and had sighted the mainland of North America. It took Englishmen about a hundred years to grasp the importance of these discoveries—and indeed the Spaniards and Portuguese took very good care to shroud them in mystery as far as they could—but when once the merchants of London had fully realised what the opening up of new lands might mean for them, the prosperity of London increased by leaps and bounds.

21. **Sir Thomas Gresham's policy.**—Sir Thomas Gresham, like Whittington, was of gentle birth; he belonged to a good family in Norfolk. He was educated at Cambridge, and at the age of twenty-four was admitted a member of the wealthy Mercers' Company. During the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, and for the first years of Elizabeth's, he was what was called 'King's Merchant' or Royal Agent at Antwerp, and was there charged with the duty of negotiating loans of money with the rich Flemish merchants for the sovereigns of England. The first important piece of work which he undertook was the reduction of the interest on these loans. The ordinary rate paid was fourteen per cent., but by Gresham's endeavours this was lowered to ten. This meant that on a loan of £200,000, say, £8000 a year was saved in interest.

Later on, in 1569, Elizabeth, by his advice, was induced to borrow money from the merchants of London and not go abroad for it at all.

But this was the least part of Gresham's services to London. While in Antwerp, he must often have been struck with the wealth and busy enterprise of that great seaport—a wealth and a bustling prosperity so great that even London itself seemed insignificant beside it. Antwerp had five thousand merchants, London not five hundred. And while he mused along the wharves of Antwerp, covered with costly merchandise and crowded with sailors of every nation, he discovered the reason for the prosperity of the Flemish town, beside which that of his own showed to such poor advantage. It was simply that the merchants of Antwerp had, as Sir Walter Besant says, 'a central place where they could meet for purposes of union and combination. Those of London had none.' This place, which had been in use at Antwerp for hundreds of years, was called a **Bourse.** In it the foreign merchants met every day to discuss prices, to handfast bargains, and to keep each other informed of the news of the commercial world. Gresham, then, having lost his only son, determined to devote his great wealth to giving the London merchants a similar place of meeting, and in the year 1571 the **Royal Exchange** was formally opened by the Queen. She first dined at Gresham's house in Bishopsgate Street, and then by sound of trumpet a herald proclaimed the Royal Exchange open, 'so to be called henceforth, and not otherwise.' And a Royal Exchange, but not Gresham's building, still stands on the same spot in Cornhill, and is still the business heart of London, which is the financial heart of the world.

22. The importance of this building to the commercial

life of the city was enormous. English merchants now acted as one body, and not, as formerly, each for his own hand. The results of Gresham's far-seeing step were immediately evident. Antwerp had fallen in 1576, and London was ready to step into her place. Companies of merchant-adventurers were formed to tap the resources of every region of the world. Westward Ho and Eastward Ho the sailors of London and the men of Devon sailed, braving the Inquisition in the Americas, running the gauntlet of Moorish corsairs on the Barbary coast of Africa, and struggling against the jealousy and hatred of the Portuguese and the Dutch in the East. The list of the trading companies, which were the direct outcome of Gresham's commercial policy, is very long. A few of them only can be given here. There was the Eastland Company, which traded in the Baltic, and the Russian Company, which brought the silks, tea, and spices of Asia from beyond the Caspian. The Turkey Company and the East India Company lasted into the 19th century, and the Hudson Bay Company (though that was founded later) lasts still. Nearly the whole of the English trade was in the hands of some company or other, which had, it must be noted, the exclusive right of trading with the countries to which it was accredited. To the Hudson Bay and to the East India Companies we owe Canada and India, which make up the largest part of the British Empire; and indirectly, therefore, we owe these great possessions to the energy and foresight of Sir Thomas Gresham.

(i) The tale of Sir Thomas Gresham's benefactions to the City of London was not completed by the building of the Royal Exchange. He also gave London a college which was, and is, called after his name. In the college, which was first started in the founder's house in Bishopsgate Street, there were to be seven professors, who would lecture on Divinity, Civil Law, Astronomy, Music, Geometry, Rhetoric, and Physic. Gresham College is now situated in Basinghall Street.

(ii) 'The career of Sir Thomas Gresham strangely resembles that of Whittington. Both were favourites with successive sovereigns. If Gresham built an Exchange, Whittington, by his will, added to Guildhall; if Gresham founded a college for the London youth, Whittington founded a college for priests and an almshouse; if Gresham restored the finances of his sovereign, Whittington gave back to him the bonds of all his debts. Both were mercers; both merchant-adventurers; both kept a shop; both were of good descent.' —BESANT.

(iii) Hakluyt, a clergyman, who wrote the lives and adventures of the Elizabethan seamen, tells us what were the chief exports of London in the sixteenth century. They included 'fine kerseys of divers colours, coarse kerseys, cottons, cloths (woollen), and calf-skins.' Into London were imported from the East, silks, rhubarb, sweet wines, oils, cotton, Turkey carpets, pepper, cinnamon, and spices (English cookery was always very highly spiced).

CHAPTER IX

LONDON UNDER THE STUARTS

1. We now come to a period during which the history of London is more than ever identified with that of England generally; and to write even the briefest history of England during these stirring times would be quite beyond the limit of so small a book as this. We must therefore content ourselves with learning a few facts that bear more particularly on the life and condition of the now fast-increasing city, and then go on to consider the two great catastrophes that befell London in the reign of the Stuarts—the **Great Plague** and the **Fire.** What the fire did for and to London is nearly impossible to conceive. Briefly, it swept away London as Elizabeth knew it and as Shakespeare wrote of it, and made room for the London of to-day. Towards the end of this period, too, we shall see how the social life of the town gradually shifted to the West End. Piccadilly and Kensington came to be places of fashionable residence, and the City was left more and more to grow into a great business-hive.

2. **London under James I.**—London was always ready to show favour to a new sovereign, and she showed it towards James. Heralds proclaimed him King in Cheapside; and the new King sent a special message to the Lord Mayor for 'his

great forwardness in that just and honourable action,' the message being a 'taste of our thankful mind for the same.' But the reign of this, the first, Stuart began with an evil omen. A horrible plague broke out again in London, and claimed 30,000 victims, chiefly from the 'sinfully polluted suburbs.' The playhouses stood empty, and the citizens fled, both by land and water, to the country. But, as may be easily imagined, the countrymen received them coldly: 'the sight of a Londoner's flat cap was dreadful to a yokel; a treble ruff threw a whole village into a sweat.' The plague was to attack London more than once again; but in 1620 a public-spirited Welshman, Sir Hugh Myddelton, put London in the way of escaping from it for ever. He gave the city the most priceless gift ever made her by a private individual—the gift of pure water. This was the **New River**, an artificial canal, the water of which still supplies a large part of London, and which, after the wells of the city had been all filled up by the ruins after the Fire, came into universal use. But meanwhile the citizens continued to drink the water that was procured by force-pumps out of the now dirty Thames, or drawn up from wells sunk in the midst of badly drained and filthy houses. Even while the plague of 1603 was raging, there were still proclamations against the spread of the city; the authorities seemed unable to recognise that this natural increase of the town was the proper safety-valve for the over-crowded city.

3. In the year 1609 James was made free of the Clothworkers' Company, which meant then, and means still, but in name only, that he was at liberty to set up a cloth-making establishment anywhere in the city. In the same year, too, the Lord Mayor's show was revived in great splendour, and

it seemed as if harmony was solidly established between the sovereign and his greatest city. But the citizens were beginning to take the measure of the fussy little Scotchman that was their king. James had asked for a loan which the city was not willing to grant; whereupon he threatened to remove the Court from Westminster and deprive London of the light of his presence altogether. The Lord Mayor listened to him quietly, and then replied, 'Your Majesty hath power to do what you please, and your City of London will obey accordingly; but she humbly desires that, when your Majesty shall remove your courts, you would please to leave the Thames behind you!' No Lord Mayor would have dared to hold such language to the great queen that sat in the throne before James; else his head had paid the penalty. Neither would the citizens have ventured in Elizabeth's time, as they did towards the end of James's reign, to stop the King's carriages, because they were driving through the streets during the hours of divine service. James was furiously angry, and asked how many kings there were in England besides himself. That was the tiny beginning of the quarrel between king and citizens, which in the next reign ended in Charles's laying his head upon the block.

(i) After James had been five years on the throne there was born in Bread Street, Cheapside, a boy, whose name London and all the world reveres. This was **John Milton.** He wrote the *Paradise Lost* in a cottage in Holborn, which was then under fields, and died in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate.

(ii) The **New River** has its rise in a collection of springs between Hertford and Ware. It continues for some miles parallel to the River Lea, and, after a winding course of some 40 miles, 'empties itself into the throats of 600,000 persons.' Sir Hugh Myddelton was a goldsmith, and bequeathed, for charitable purposes, a single share in the New River to the Goldsmiths' Company. This one share now produces £200 a year.

(iii) The laws against **vagrancy**, under King James, were very stringent. London and Westminster were divided into four districts, over each of which was set a 'surveyor,' to punish vagrants. Some of these loose characters were flogged; some kept in Bridewell and set to work, 'which was worse than death to them'; while 'divers idle young people' were shipped to Virginia, there to labour on the plantations.

4. **London under Charles I.**—The reign of Charles began, as his father's had begun, with another violent outbreak of the plague, so that the customary procession through the city had to be omitted, and, for dread of infection, the Parliament was moved to Oxford. Charles did not wait long before he entered upon the career of enforced loans and illegal extortion, which ended in his execution. The citizens were asked for a loan of £100,000. It was refused, and the imprisonment of those who had procured the refusal embittered the quarrel still further. But money the King must have, and Charles chose Strafford as the instrument of his hideously foolish policy. Strafford was beheaded in 1641; and as the axe fell bonfires blazed, the bells clashed out the news, and the citizens rushed about waving their hats, and crying, 'His head is off! his head is off!'

Then came the final stand against imposition of ship-money, and the famous scene in the House of Commons, where the King himself appeared to arrest the Five Members. They had taken refuge with the citizens, and the King (who never lacked for courage) drove to the Guildhall to demand their surrender, but without success. As he drove back to his palace of Whitehall the London mob pressed round his coach, yelling 'Privilege of Parliament!' But London was soon to do something more effectual than shouting. Charles could see for himself that an unbearable situation was fast developing, and, on the 10th of January 1642, he left London never to return to it again except as a prisoner. Next day the sheriffs of London brought back the Five Members to Westminster by water, and from London Bridge to Westminster the river was crowded with boats, pleasure-barges, and wherries, all gaily dressed with streamers to commemorate the victory of the Parliament and the disgrace of the King.

5. War was declared on the 22nd of August 1642, and Charles at once directed his march towards the capital, for the possession of London and all its resources would be of infinite importance towards deciding the result of the Civil War. Instantly the citizens began to arm and fortify themselves against the King. Round the whole city and suburbs, and round Southwark and Westminster, a strong earthwork was drawn; the people cheerfully contributed £10,000 a week towards the expenses of the war; and the trained bands formed themselves into regiments, distinguished by white, yellow, orange and green scarves, and commanded by the city aldermen. Deterred by these formidable preparations the King continued his advance only as far as Brentford, and then fell back on Reading and Oxford, and London was never even threatened by his forces again. Throughout the whole course of the war London stood steadfastly by the cause of the Parliament; and Charles learnt, by bitter experience, the lesson so many English kings had had to learn before him, that London is always on the winning side, and that the sovereign who has lost her favour is a sovereign no longer.

(i) It was during this reign that the first great exodus of the wealthy and the fashionable towards the west end of London took place. It has already been mentioned how Piccadilly was being taken up for the building of fashionable residences; and some time later Clarendon, Berkeley, and Burlington houses were built on the north side of it.

(ii) In the year 1632 the great square or piazza of Covent Garden was built. Covent Garden, which is now London's great fruit and vegetable market, is really the Convent Garden which was used by the monks of Westminster Abbey. In Charles's reign several streets were built near it, and named, in honour of various members of the royal family, Henrietta, Charles, James, King, and York Streets.

6. **The Commonwealth and Charles II.**—London had won the Civil War, and she was now to pay the price of her victory. A tumult, probably raised by the disbanded soldiers of the royalist army, had sprung up in the city, and Fairfax, the head of the victorious Parliamentarian army, made it a pretext for entering the gates. The rioters were quelled in what was known as the battle of Cornhill, and London was now to feel the heavy hand of the Puritan army. Colonel Pride, a zealous fanatic, at once put down all the playhouses in Southwark; the soldiers were billeted on the inhabitants; and Cromwell obtained what money he wanted by the simple expedient of going and taking it from the treasuries of the different companies. This was in the beginning of December 1648; and the 'sour-visaged saints' further demanded from the Common Council pay and provisions for the army till the 25th of March in the next year. Soon a reaction began in the minds of the citizens: Lord-Mayor Reynardson refused to proclaim the abolition of royalty, and the execution of Charles raised a vast fund of loyalty in favour of his son, for London had always a traditional regard for the person of the sovereign. But, for the rest, the history of the city under the rule of Cromwell was uneventful. Thanks to him, the name of England was universally respected abroad, both by sea and land, and London reaped her advantage in a large increase of commerce. The citizens, who invariably treated him with almost regal honours, would have been glad enough

to have had him for their king. Any ruler, whose government was favourable to the development of commerce and trade, was sure of a very high place in their favour.

One of the earliest acts of Cromwell, before he had actually been proclaimed Protector, was to allow the **Jews** to return to England after an absence of centuries. Those that did come back settled chiefly in the neighbourhood of the Aldgate.

7. **The Restoration.**—The gentle, virtuous Richard Cromwell soon fell, and General Monk entered into negotiations with the mayor and aldermen of London, the result of which was the restoration of Charles II. on May 29th, 1660. Thus an end was put to the painful suspense, when everybody in London was wondering what would happen next, and when the street-boys were singing—

Monk under a hood, not well understood,
The City pull in their horns;
The Speaker is out, and sick of the gout,
And the Parliament sit upon thorns.

Amidst the greatest enthusiasm Charles made his entrance into the city. In fact, as Samuel Pepys, who kept a diary at the time, afterwards says of the Coronation, 'it is impossible to relate the glory of this day, expressed in the clothes of them that rid, and their horses and horse-cloths.' But the fatality which attended the accession of the first two Stuart kings immediately followed the 'Glorious Restoration.' London was scourged in 1660 with an outbreak of smallpox, of which the King's brother was one of the first victims. Save for this evil omen, everything seemed to smile for the young king—an obsequious Parliament, unlimited supplies of money, the city devoted to him, the whole nation mad with joy at his return. Indeed, as he laughingly remarked himself, it must have been his own fault that he had not come back before, for he saw no one who did not protest he had always longed for his return.

Pepys in his diary tells the story of the reception that General Monk met with on his entry into London. 'I saw many people give the soldiers drink and money, and all along the streets cried, "God bless them!" and extraordinary good words. In Cheapside there was a great many bonfires, and Bow-bells and all the bells in all the Churches as we went home were a-ringing. . . . I could at one time tell thirty-one bonfires, all along, burning, and roasting and drinking for rumps, there being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the Maypole in the Strand (where stands the Church of St. Mary-le-Strand) rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. On Ludgate Hill there was one turning of a spit that had a rump tied upon it, and another basting of it. At one end of the street you would think there was a whole lane of fire, and so hot that we were fain to keep on the further side.'[1]

8. The nation gave itself over to rejoicing, for men were sick of the austere solemnity and mirthlessness of the Puritans: the Maypoles were set up in London again, and every theatre was crowded. But all this rejoicing and goodwill did not prevent a brutally senseless vengeance being wreaked on the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, which were dug up out of their graves to be hanged at Tyburn, and then buried underneath the gallows. At Charing Cross, too, were executed twelve of the so-called regicides in the presence of the King himself; and 'their quarters,' says one who saw them, 'mangled, and cut, and reeking, were brought from the gallows in baskets on a hurdle.'

Those appalling disasters, the Plague and the Fire, will be spoken of presently, and we come to the closing scenes of Charles's relations with the city, when, like Edward I., he tried to 'take London into his own hand.' Even with the awful example of his father before him Charles could not see the unwisdom of alienating the affections of the City of London by wayward oppression. Undeterred, then, by any reflection on his father's fate, the King, egged on by his brother, who afterwards became James II., determined to crush the liberties of the city. In the year 1683 he issued a writ whereby the city charter became forfeited, and London was taken into commission—that is, its own municipal government was abolished, and it was governed directly by the King, or by any man whom he chose to appoint.

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[1] The RUMP was the name given to the remains of the Long Parliament, which had lasted from 1640 to 1660.

9. But before this act of injustice, London had already endured another blow at the hands of its lying, worthless king. In the year 1672 Charles, who was in desperate need of money for prosecuting a war against the Dutch, had declared the exchequer closed, and confiscated all the money then lying there. The result of this act of brigandage was that he plundered the city of nearly £1,300,000, and that most of the goldsmiths, who were the bankers of the time and who had lent their money to the King, were ruined. From that time to his death, in 1685, London turned against the King, and James, the instigator of the suppression of the city charter, reaped in his own reign the evil harvest of his own and his brother's crime.

(i) 'The **population** of London was, in 1662, estimated at 460,000, of which a fifth part were housed in the somewhat regularly built, but now overfilled, city; while the multitudes of the poorer class were crowded (as they are to-day) into the alleys and courts of Cripplegate, Spitalfields, Whitechapel, Wapping, St. Olave's, and the other Southwark parishes, Bermondsey, Newington Butts, Lambeth, St. Giles, and Clerkenwell. If the old city was unsanitary, the liberties and outparishes were far worse; for they had been built upon with few main arteries beside the old country highways, and they made on a map the impression rather of an interminable maze than of an orderly system of streets.'—CREIGHTON.

(ii) The confiscation of the moneys lying in the exchequer was really an act of national bankruptcy. 'The shutting of the exchequer came like a clap of thunder on the city. There was a run upon the goldsmiths; the most respectable merchants were obliged to break; private families, widows and orphans were ruined.'

10. **The Life and Streets of London under Charles II.**—Under the control of the Commonwealth England had ceased to be merry England. Theatres, games, and sports had either been discouraged or put down altogether by the strong hand of Cromwell and his sad-faced Puritan followers. 'The Puritan,' said Lord Macaulay, 'hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators'; and London was forced to take its pleasure sadly, or not at all. But with the Restoration gaiety and frolic returned, accompanied, it must be added, with a most unblushing profligacy of manners. Theatres became popular and fashionable again, the more so because the King generally went to the play every night. The two chief theatres were **Drury Lane**, or the King's House, and the **Duke's House** in Fleet Street. At both of these places the citizens could constantly get a sight of their king; or, if they wished it, they might go to St. James's Park, which was thrown open to the public, and there watch Charles and his brother James feeding the water-fowl. The streets again became playgrounds of the people: the citizens, both men and women, played football there, and crossed the water to Bankside in Southwark to see the bull-baiting. That cruel amusement went on in the Bear Garden (the name of which still survives in a lane near the end of Southwark Bridge). Pepys speaks of it as a 'rude, nasty pleasure,' and mentions how he once saw the bull toss

one of the dogs into the very boxes. A new pleasure-ground was opened at Vauxhall[1]—'a pretty contrived plantation,' where fine people walked to hear the nightingales. Despite the great spread of population from the bounds of the city proper (for by the year 1662 the total population of London was nearly 500,000, of whom one-fifth only lived within the walls) green fields and pleasant country lanes were within easy walk of the crowded streets. Workmen took their wives and children to gather flowers in the meadows of Islington and Hoxton, and the 'quality' rode in their glass-coaches to Hyde Park for air.

11. The streets were still in a very ill-kept condition, though in the year 1684 the first systematic attempt was made towards lighting them properly. In the city itself the ruins were not cleared away for a long time after the Great Fire: and so many footpads and highway robbers lurked among them that men who had to go through the streets at night did so in fear and trembling for their purses and their persons. Pepys once tells us how he sat in his carriage with a drawn sword beside him all the time he was passing through some of the ruined streets. In 1662 the road from St. James's Palace into London was a quagmire, and so also was Piccadilly. Foot-passengers were seldom able to cross London Bridge owing to the press of wheeled traffic upon it, and the river was still the favourite highway for getting about from place to place. Even then there was danger, however; for lives were constantly lost in shooting the rapids under London Bridge. But the dangers of the river were preferable to the dangers of the streets, where at every turn you were liable to be jostled by 'hectors,' hired

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[1] Vauxhall=Fulke's Hall. Fulke de Breauté was one of King John's mercenaries.

bullies and nose-slitters, who undertook acts of private vengeance for those who were rich enough, or mean enough, to engage their brutal services.

The prentices were still as noisy and turbulent as ever. On the last Sunday in March 1664, they rushed tumultuously to Cheapside and beat a certain tradesman who had pilloried two of their number the day before. The disturbance was so great that the military, with drums beating, had to be called out to put it down. 'But it was pleasant,' says Pepys, 'to hear the boys, and particularly one little one that I demanded the business of. He told me that had never been done in the city since it was a city—two prentices put in the pillory! and that it ought not to be so.' Sometimes, too, the grown men of different trades, between whom jealousies had sprung up, turned out in a body to settle their quarrel with fists in the street. A little later than the prentices' riot, a fray of this kind was fought between the butchers and the weavers in Moorfields. The butchers got soundly beaten, and had to pull off their blue sleeves so that they should not be known, and the weavers paraded the streets in triumph, calling out, 'A hundred pounds for a butcher!'

12. **James II. to Anne.**—When Charles II. lay a-dying the Londoners crowded the churches to pray for his recovery. They did not like him, but they hated his brother worse. The city was still in commission, and, more than that, the Protestant people of London saw that James was fully determined, if he were able, to restore the Roman Catholic religion. Carmelites, Benedictine and Franciscan monks openly appeared in their cowls and girdled robes in the streets, and Roman Catholic services were held in St. Paul's. But the end was not far off. On June 30, 1688, the Seven

Bishops were acquitted, and on the same day Admiral Herbert left London to carry the invitation to **William of Orange** to become King of England.

James saw that the situation was getting desperate, and, as a last resource, attempted to regain the favour of the citizens by giving them back their charter. But it was too late. The east wind, that every man in London had been praying for, had brought William to the shores of England, and James's reign was at an end. On December 11 he left Whitehall secretly in a hired carriage, called a boat at Millbank, and, dropping the Great Seal into the river, left London never to return.

13. The Lord Mayor, who again ruled over London in virtue of the charter restored by James, at once issued a formal invitation to William and Mary to take possession of the vacant throne, and gathered a loan of £200,000 for the new sovereigns. London thus for the last time claimed and exercised her ancient right of appointing the King of England. But after this formal invitation to the throne, the history of London during this reign only forms part of the general history of England. William himself cared little for the city. Its smoky climate gave him asthma; and, as a great part of Whitehall was burned in the year 1691, he made Kensington Palace his favourite residence. A broad road was made to the Palace, which was lighted up with lanterns at night; and Kensington, from being an insignificant village, soon grew to be a most fashionable quarter.

By far the most important event in William's reign for London, and indeed for the world at large, was the foundation of the **Bank of England** in the year 1694. It was founded by an enterprising Scotsman, William Paterson, and was carried on in the **Grocers' Hall** in Poultry till 1734, when it was removed to its present site in **Threadneedle Street.**

14. The reign of **Anne** was an uneventful one as far as the direct history of London is concerned. But it too, like the reign of William, was marked by one of the great triumphs of peace—the establishment in 1710 of a **General Post Office**, which placed the various parts of the kingdom in communication with each other. Furthermore, in 1708, **Sir Christopher Wren** brought to completion the mighty Cathedral of St. Paul's, which had taken more than thirty-seven years in the building. Wren was also the architect of more than fifty new churches in the city itself, and in 1710 a special Act of Parliament was passed which authorised the construction of as many more in the suburbs.

15. **Social Life of London under William and Mary and Anne.**—Against excess of every kind there always comes a reaction, and against the example of drinking, gambling, and profligacy, set by Charles II. and his Court, the minds of the people of London revolted with the coming of the Protestant champion, Prince William. This age is marked by the rising up in London of many societies for the suppression of vice, which obtained both the sympathy and encouragement of the King. Some of the soberer citizens banded themselves into a 'Society for the Reformation of Manners,' and obtained thousands of convictions for cursing, drunkenness, and profanation of the Lord's day. Sermons were periodically preached at Bow Church, setting forth the objects of the association; and about this time (1698) were founded the two great Societies for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.) and for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts (S.P.G.). As for theatres, Queen Anne never

went to any in public, and the only two playhouses that were open during her reign were Drury Lane and the Haymarket Theatres, at both of which places the music of the great German composer, Handel, began to be performed.

16. Since the days of Henry II. there had been held in Smithfield a great fair, called **Bartholomew Fair.** For several centuries it had been the principal cloth fair of England, but in time came to be a place given over to exhibitions of wrestling and shooting, puppet shows, tight-rope dancing, and the showing of dwarfs, monsters, and wild beasts. These exhibitions were always attended with much disorder, and both Bartholomew Fair and May Fair (from which a most fashionable part of London near Piccadilly derives its name) were in Queen Anne's time 'the chiefest nurseries of vice.' In 1708 May Fair was abolished altogether, and Bartholomew Fair was put under severe restrictions by the magistrates.

From very early times there had existed in London the custom of Shrove-Tuesday cock-throwing. The object of the sport was to throw cocks, with their legs tied together, upon sharpened stakes. This brutal practice was now forbidden; but cock-fighting, cock against cock, was as popular as ever, and the 'Gentlemen of Warwickshire' issued challenges for a 'cocking-main' against the 'Gentlemen of London, at ten pound the battle, and fifty pound the odd battle, to show one-and-twenty cocks.' Though the river was still the most largely used highway for getting about London, yet during this period hackney-coaches came very greatly into vogue. A hackney-coach stood at every corner, and London (who now boasts her 70,000 cabs) thought herself lucky, in the year 1710, to possess 800 hackney-coaches and 200 sedan chairs.

CHAPTER X

THE PLAGUE AND THE FIRE

1. **The Plague.**—We are often accustomed to think that the Great Plague, which swept London in the year 1665, was the only one, or at all events the only one of dreadful severity, that had ever attacked the city. But this notion is quite wrong. You must several times before have noticed in this book that mention has been made of the **Black Death** and the **Sweating Sickness.** Both these diseases are often included under the one general name of the Plague, but all of them were very different in character. One feature, however, the three scourges had in common; and that was their origin. And their origin was dirt. One's only wonder is that the filthy habits of the English people, and the appalling want of caution they showed with regard to all sanitary arrangements, had not made the Plague, or some similar scourge, a permanent dweller with the Londoners. The houses of the poorer classes were filthy beyond the power of words to describe. The floors, made of pounded earth, were strewed with rushes, new rushes were constantly being thrown down on the top of the old, and the whole floor was littered besides with broken victuals, bones, and every kind of garbage. But more dangerous still, as a means of distributing the plague-poison, was London's water-supply. The water that came in conduits

from the Tyburn and other brooks, and the water of the New River, was safe enough. The larger number of the people, however, got their drinking-water from force-pumps on London Bridge, and as the city grew, the Thames grew polluted with it. But a far more dangerous source of supply was from wells sunk right in the midst of the houses themselves. You can think of what this means for yourselves. Think of drinking-water being drawn out of a well sunk in the dirtiest and most crowded spot you know; and remember also that in the middle of the seventeenth century drainage, as we know it, did not exist. The same fate befell London in the seventeenth century, as came to Maidstone in the nineteenth. Both places drew their drinking-water from contaminated sources, and for both towns the result was the same—typhoid fever for Maidstone, and the Plague for London.

2. These then were the conditions which had always made London (as well as every other large city, both in Europe then, and in the East now) the happy hunting-ground of the Plague. Dirt was the cause of it in London in 1665, and dirt is the cause of it in the densely packed cities of Asia to-day.

The first mention of the Plague in London was in the year 962. It came again with awful severity in 1349, as well as many times before. Between the years of 1500 and 1635 it occurred ten times, and had then become so common that people troubled their heads very little about it. But all the outbreaks culminated in the fearful calamity of the year 1665, when London contained about 500,000 people.

In the autumn of 1664 it had been raging at Amsterdam, and the infection was brought to London the same year in a parcel of silks which had been imported from that town.

Two Frenchmen, who lived in the upper end of Drury Lane, in or about Long Acre, opened the parcel, and both died. This was in the month of December 1664. The winter's frost checked the disease for a while, but with the coming of the warmer weather in March it broke out again. For some months the cases of the plague were few till the month of June arrived, and nobody was very seriously alarmed. The weather then began to be dry and fiercely hot; the sun shone pitilessly down from a glaring sky; little or no rain fell; and the very birds were too exhausted to move. People began to die like rats. A panic seized on London, and thousands streamed out into the country, of course carrying the infection with them. The King and Court fled to Oxford. Only the stout old General Monk, now Duke of Albemarle, stuck to his post, chewing tobacco to keep away the risk of infection, and some Nonconformist Ministers remained too, to comfort the sick and pray with the dying. The city began to look like a city of the dead—as Augusta must have looked after the Britons had left it. Grass grew in the streets; Leadenhall Street and Cornhill looked like green fields; and about the deserted thoroughfares there wandered an awful figure of a man, naked for all but a cloth about his loins, carrying a pan of burning charcoal on his head, and for ever wailing out the words, 'Oh! the Great and the Dreadful God!' What remedies the Lord Mayor and the magistrates could think of they used; but they were few and of small effect. Fires were lighted in the streets, as if it were not hot enough already; the dogs, cats, rats, and mice were killed as possible carriers of infection; and searchers were appointed to go round the houses and report any cases of the disease. When a case of the Plague was discovered in a house, it was marked with a red cross on the door, and the words, 'Lord have mercy upon us!' written beside it. A watchman was set over the house, and the inmates were not allowed to leave it under any pretence. They lived together in terror, or died unattended or uncared for, even by those who were nearest to them in blood. Often a poor wretch, frenzied with pain, would burst past the watchman, and rush naked down the street, followed by his weeping children, or wife, or mother. No one dared stop him, for all dreaded the contagion of his touch.

3. Medical art had to confess itself powerless, and the number of quacks that sprang up with their 'royal antidotes,' 'never-failing preservatives,' and 'only true plague water,' was endless. But no remedy could avail, when the Plague had once fastened its grip. The symptoms were simple: a little vomiting, a little fever, the bursting out of hard swellings in different parts of the body, and then death, sometimes in a few hours, or if the sufferer survived the disease itself, he often succumbed to the weakness that followed it, or to the exhaustion which was occasioned by the lancing of the ulcers. Then came the death-cart. All night long it rumbled through the streets, collecting here a single body, and there a whole household, while the buriers, who walked beside, rang a bell and kept up a continuous chant of 'Bring out your dead! Bring out your dead!' Many a poor soul died unknown in the deserted houses, but the most of the corpses—some of them scarce clothed—were borne away to the charnel pits at Bunhill Fields, where Finsbury Square is now, and at Tothill Fields in Westminster. 'They died by heaps,' says Defoe (whose *Story of the Plague* every one ought to read), 'and they were buried by heaps.' Into these two

great pits the dead were tumbled without ceremony and without service, for there was no time for either, and a thin sprinkling of earth was thrown upon them. Men told of terrible scenes that happened there: of people cast out into the death cart while yet alive, and so buried; how many poor demented creatures, delirious and near their end, would run to the pits, wrapped only in rugs and blankets, and die on the top of the ghastly heap of corpses; and how the buriers often found such bodies, quite dead, but not yet cold.

4. By September of 1665 the disease had reached its height, and the people were then dying at the rate of 1500 each day. Human aid was powerless: men could only stay shut up in their houses and pray to God for deliverance; while those that were not yet infected were touchingly regular in their attendance at church. Food was happily plentiful enough, for the King, Lord Mayor, and aldermen each gave large sums every week to provide for the stricken city. The buyers at such markets as were still open picked out their meat or vegetables with a hook, and then dropped the money in payment into bowls of vinegar. Hundreds—thousands—of people were thrown out of work, and scores of ships lay idly at anchor in the Thames, for all foreign exportation was stopped. Only the coal-trade with Newcastle, to supply the street fires, was briskly maintained. Towards the end of October, as the weather got cooler, the plague began to die away, and by February of next year it had practically ceased. Men once more ventured forth into the streets again; and passers-by joyfully greeted each other in the thoroughfares, where a few weeks before the only figures were those of the buriers, their heads gloomily swathed in vinegar-steeped cloths.

5. The reckoning of the victims of the Plague was yet to be made up. More or less accurate death-bills had been kept during the course of the disease; and, judging from these and from other things as well, it is believed that not less than 100,000 people perished in the last six months of the year 1665. That is: a fifth of the whole population of London was no more, and with this sacrifice the plague-demon has remained content, for it has never returned to England since. The lesson it taught the Londoners of the seventeenth century is a lesson for us now—that dirt and disease go hand in hand, and that to be healthy you must be clean.

6. **The Fire.**—By the month of February in 1666 all serious danger from the Plague was at an end. It had not, however, died out altogether, for in September of that year the diarist, Pepys, notes that 'this poor town' was still burying seven or eight people a day that had died of the awful disease. Yet these were but trifles after all that had passed, and people's minds were beginning to calm down again. Every one was busy disinfecting the houses, by whitewashing them inside and out, and burning up and washing all linen, clothes, and bedding, that had come in contact with the plague-poison. But another disinfectant, infinitely more powerful than the burning of a few blankets, was at hand, which was to scour London as no human hands could do it. As London had been attacked many times before by the Plague, so also had it been wasted often before by fire. In the year 961 a great part of the town had been destroyed by fire, and there had also been terrible ravages in 1077, 1086, and 1093. In the year 1136 London Bridge, which was then a wooden structure, had been con-

sumed, and with it went most of what remained of Saxon London.

7. But all these burnings were as nothing compared with the Great Fire of 1666. The summer of that year was as hot as the fatal June of the year before. A strong east wind had been blowing for weeks; and that, and the parching sun, had so dried the timber of the houses as to make them as combustible as touchwood. The fire first broke out one sultry night in a baker's shop in **Pudding Lane**, near Fish Street Hill; it started at about one in the morning of Sunday, September 2nd. The houses and warehouses in this locality were very old and thickly crowded together, and were full besides of such inflammable materials as pitch, oil, and brandy. The people at first were beset with a sort of apathy: it was a fire, it was true, and a dangerous one, but it would be soon put out. They had got the better of other fires, and they would master this one. But it was found that its progress could not be stayed, for there was not enough water to quench it. The water-supply from the force-pump on London Bridge was no longer available, the New River water had for some reason or other failed, and the panic soon came to be terrible and wide-spread. Men began to ask what was to be done; but nothing was done, because, for one thing, the streets were so narrow that the fire-engines could not get in to play upon the flames. Pepys meets the Lord Mayor, Bludworth ('a poor silly man'), in Cannon Street, 'like a man spent, with a handkerchief round his neck,' and crying like a fainting woman, 'Lord! what can I do? I am spent; people will not obey me.' Nobody tried for some time to quench the fire; the aim of every man was to save his own goods and leave his neighbours' houses to their fate. The

poor people worked fiercely to save their furniture and valuables, flinging them into the river, or into lighters that lay off the wharves; some even stayed in their houses till the flames scorched them. The pigeons, too, were loath to leave the houses, and hovered about the windows and balconies till their wings were scorched, and they fell down into the fire. Those who could not get their household stuff away by river or into the country by carts, with a sad sort of unreason, brought their goods to the churches, as if those sacred buildings would be spared where all else was consumed. All over the Thames a shower of fire-drops fell, and these burning showers, carried by the east wind, spread the conflagration with fearful rapidity. Towards the evening of Sunday Pepys took a boat and went over to the Southwark side of the river, and there saw the fire grow 'in a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame, not like the fire-flame of an ordinary fire.' The work of purging London of the plague-poison was most effectually begun.

8. By the night of the 2nd September all Gracechurch, Fenchurch, and Lombard Streets were in ashes, and the flames were speeding fast along the river bank and Thames Street. By the night of the 4th, Tuesday, by far the greater part of the city was consumed, and the flames had licked up all Fleet Street as far as the Temple, but were there stopped by some brick buildings which would not catch fire. Among other things that night, the sight of the Guildhall was a fearful spectacle; for the solid oak timbers, of which it was built, made it glow without flames like a bright shining coal, 'as if it had been a palace of gold or a great building of burnished brass.'

All Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and most of Wednesday the fire raged on. But if the Lord Mayor could only behave like a fainting woman, there were happily men in London who did not lose their heads, and who took active measures to check the spread of the fire, which soon began to threaten the suburbs. These were the King and his brother, the Duke of York. By their orders houses were pulled down and blown up with gunpowder at various critical points, and so the advance of the flames was stayed. This measure (which was suggested to the King by Mr. Pepys) was resorted to at the Temple Church, at Pye Corner in Smithfield, and at Aldersgate, Bishopsgate, and Cripplegate. Nearly opposite St. Bartholomew's Hospital, there still stands the statue of a boy, which commemorates the stoppage of the fire at that point.

9. By Friday at midday the danger was over, and the people had rest from their terrors, and breathing-space to contemplate the extent of their loss. The City of London was gone. Or, as a pedantic preacher put it in his sermon on the following Sunday, 'the City was reduced from a large folio to a decimo-tertio.' Put in bare figures, the account stood thus: 396 acres of houses were destroyed, being five-sixths of the city; 13,200 houses were in ruins, eighty-nine churches, and four of the city gates; damage had been done to the value of £10,000,000, and 200,000 people were homeless. The only part of the city that was left was in the north-east corner, included between the Wall and a straight line running from Coleman Street[1] to the Tower Hill; the rest of the city was a smoking ruin, which extended westwards as far as the Temple Church.

All the great buildings of London were down,—the Guildhall, the Custom House, the Exchange, all the Companies' halls, and the Cathedral of St. Paul's. In the crypt of St. Paul's, believing it to be a place of absolute safety, the booksellers of Paternoster Row had stored most of their books. Four days after the fire had been got under among the ruins of the church, the doors of the crypt were opened, the smouldering sheets of the books were fanned into fresh flame, and thus the great church was burnt to its very foundations. Sir Thomas Gresham's Exchange, too, was gone—all burnt except the statue of the founder, which seemed to stand mournfully surveying the ruins of his work. 'I also did see,' says Pepys, 'a poor cat taken out of a hole in a chimney, joining to the wall of the Exchange, with the hair all burnt off the body, and yet alive.'

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[1] The street of the 'coal-men,' or charcoal-burners.

10. The people who had lost their homes, took refuge for the time in the open space of Moorfields, and luckily the weather was fine, so that none took any harm from having to live in tents or hastily constructed huts. But they did not stay there long. The men of London were not, and are not, of the stuff to let any calamity, however great, strike them helpless. The mayor and aldermen asked for plans for the rebuilding of the city, and two great architects, Wren and Evelyn, submitted plans which should make London rise again from her ashes, but on the hideous rectangular, straight-lined plan of the towns of the United States. Happily the citizens were before them: each man, while yet the ashes were hardly cool, went back to the site of his old home, and began to build on it again. So the streets and lanes of London—the skeleton of the city—remained the same.

11. It took two years to clear away the ruins, and two years more before the city—at least the dwelling-houses in

it—was finally rebuilt. But when the houses rose again, they were no longer built of wood and plaster, but of brick; tiles replaced the old-fashioned thatch, so that now the chief danger from fire was done away with. The streets, too, were in general made wider, and footways were constructed on either side, with posts to keep off the wagons and carts. Finally, in the year 1677, was finished the great memorial to the Great Fire. This is the **Monument** on Fish Street Hill, 202 feet high, and 202 feet distant from the spot where the fire first broke out on that Sunday morning of the 2nd of September.

So ended the Fire of London. One thing more there is to say of it—and this is perhaps the most wonderful circumstance of any—that, amid all the destruction of the fire, and amid all the panic of the people, not a single person was known either to have been burnt in any house, or to have been trampled to death in the streets.

(i) How the fire originated was never discovered. But it was most unjustly attributed to the Roman Catholics, and an offensive inscription was cut round the base of the monument commemorating this slander. This caused Pope, who was a Roman Catholic, to write of 'London's column,' which—

Pointing at the skies
Like a tall bully lifts the head and lies.

The malicious inscription was obliterated in the reign of James II., recut deeper than before in the reign of William III., and not finally erased till January 26, 1831, a year after the accession of William IV.

(ii) 'It is observed, and it is true, in the late Fire of London, that the fire burnt just as many churches as there were hours from the beginning to the end of the fire; and, next, that there were just as many churches left standing in the rest of the City that was not burnt, being, I think, thirteen in all of each; which is pretty to observe.'—PEPYS' *Diary*, January 7, 1667.

CHAPTER XI

LONDON UNDER THE GEORGES

1. **The Spread of the Town.**—We have now arrived at a time when outside London—the town, or the circle of towns and villages, that was springing up without the old walls—was beginning to be more important in many ways than the city proper. 'Why, sir,' said Dr. Johnson, in the year 1775, to his friend and biographer, Boswell, 'I think the tide of human existence is at Charing Cross.' And Charing Cross still is the heart of London. The city had ceased to be a residence of the great nobles: it contained no palaces, unless we count the Mansion House, the official residence of the Lord Mayor, which was built in 1750. But many of the wealthy and powerful merchants still lived over their places of business, and, finishing their work in the office by two o'clock, retired to the upper rooms to pass the rest of the day over their pipes and wine.

London can no longer be considered as a whole. It has grown into a mere collection of houses, and, though its business pulse still beats in the city, that fraction of the vast whole, from the eighteenth century onwards, ceases to enjoy the importance *as a whole* which it had exercised for the past eight hundred years.

2. Very early in the eighteenth century the spread of the town westwards grew apace. But the age of the Georges

was characterised by a coarseness of public taste and a depravity of manners such as hardly any other age had exhibited, and these evil qualities had their effect in the erection of tasteless public buildings and painfully ugly private houses. At the **West End** building operations were pressed busily forward; and in 1717 we hear that the new buildings between Bond Street and Marylebone[1] were let and sold 'even before they were built.' **Eastwards**, too, the town was growing, and, by the middle of George the Second's reign, streets, two or three deep, crept along the river-bank as far as Limehouse. They were inhabited by sailors and those who made their living out of the river—watermen, river-pirates, and barge-thieves, who were called 'light-horsemen.' Southwark was now a town of half a million, and Westminster was a great city in itself. But towards the **North** London still remained unbuilt upon. In the year 1756 the site of the British Museum was a farm, and later still the now fashionable district round Portman Square looked out on woods and green fields. Towards the **South-west** and **South**, Chelsea was only an outlying country village, and South Lambeth was strongly recommended as a health-resort; for the south-west wind blew over it fresh from the country, and the rigours of the north-east wind were softened by blowing over the town.

3. Inside the City the Great Fire had done away with most of the old landmarks, and the reforming hand of the eighteenth century was to do away with still more. The **Fleet**, which had provided the Londoners with one of their first harbours, now ceased to exist as a river, for, in 1735, it was covered over and became a roadway as far as Holborn

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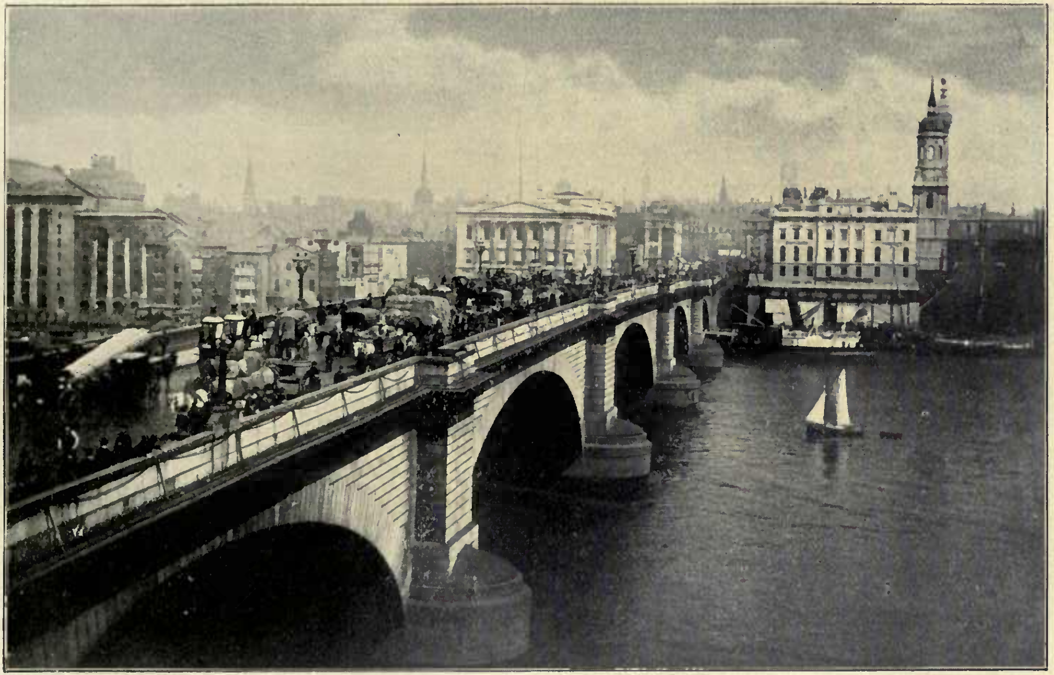
[1] Marylebone means the Church of St. Mary-on-the-bourne, i.e. the Tyburn.

Bridge. Even yet, however, degraded as it is into a sewer, it 'occasionally betrays its existence after heavy rains or a sudden thaw.' In the year 1760 the **Old Wall**, that had been the pride and bulwark of the city for so long, came down. The gates of Moorgate, Aldersgate, Aldgate, Cripplegate, and Ludgate were pulled down with it, and were sold as so much old rubbish for various sums ranging from £60 to £170. London was growing, and could not afford to have the main arteries of her traffic obstructed by gateways that would not permit two carts to pass abreast, for the day of the pack-horse was gone, and the streets were full of drays and lorries as they are to-day. The increase of traffic gave rise to new bridges, and between the years 1750 and 1815 (Waterloo year) the Thames was spanned by **Westminster**, **Blackfriars** (one end of which rested on the site of the old monastery), and **Southwark Bridges**. The 'silent waterway' of the river no longer sufficed for the busy life of the great commercial town. But besides the removal of the gates and the construction of new bridges, the alteration in **London Bridge** was yet more noteworthy. 'As fine as London Bridge' was a common proverb, but in 1757 the work of the old twelfth-century monk was shorn of its glories. Its houses, between which the single strings of pack-horses used to wind slowly along, were pulled down, and the roadway was widened to 31 feet; while underneath two of the piers were knocked out, and a single arch thrown across the space thus gained. This last change was very necessary, for much precious merchandise, and even men's lives, were lost in shooting the dangerous rapids that gushed through the narrow arches. 'London Bridge,' said the proverb, 'was made for wise men to go over, and fools to go under.'



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NEW LONDON BRIDGE

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With the pulling down of the Wall, and the alteration of the Bridge, the two chief features which connected New London with the Old were gone. The Bridge had stood for nearly six hundred years, and continued to stand till it was replaced by the present structure in 1831.

(i) Of the spread of London westward, the novelist, Henry Fielding, writing in 1752, says:—'Within the memory of many now living, the circle of the people of fascination (fashion), included the whole parish of Covent Garden and the greater part of St. Giles-in-the-Fields; but here the enemy (the common people) broke in, and the circle was presently contracted to Leicester Fields and Golden Square. Hence the people of fashion again retreated before the foe to Hanover Square, whence they were once more driven to Grosvenor Square and even beyond it, and that with such precipitation, that had they not been stopped by the walls of Hyde Park, it is more than probable they would by this time have arrived in Kensington.'

(ii) On the west front of Ludgate, which had been spared by the Great Fire, stood a statue of Queen Elizabeth. It is now placed on the south wall of St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet Street.

4. **The Streets.**—Georgian London was not a stately, neither was it a picturesque, city. The old gabled houses, except in a very few places that the Fire had spared, had disappeared, and in their stead were built dull, tall houses, with sash windows and flat fronts. But more attention was paid to the streets. Proper pavements were provided for foot passengers, and the roadways were set with kidney-shaped stones, while later (in 1766) proper causeways of squares of Scotch granite were laid down, and gutters and kerb-stones added at the sides. But though the actual state of the streets themselves was less dangerous, to frequent them, and especially by night, was a matter of great risk. There were no police—only a few decrepit old men, called watchmen, that slowly perambulated the town through the night and called out the hours. Bullies jostled people off

the pavement, and would only listen to the argument of a thick stick; fights were continually going on between hackney-coachmen and porters; and the prentices were nearly as turbulent as ever. And then the noise was intolerable—at least we should think so now. Heavy wheelless drays, shod with iron, ground over the stones, and the street-cries were innumerable and deafening. Outside each shop there stood eager prentices, calling their masters' wares and inviting customers to enter; and in the streets themselves a thousand and one of the common necessaries of life —fish, milk, bread, fruit, ink, biscuits, and matches—were bawled aloud by hawkers. But the noise of London was the pride of the citizens: they saw in it an evidence of the great prosperity of their city, and the attention of country cousins, when they came to town, was specially invited to this Babel of sounds.

5. **London Sights.**—Then the country visitors must be taken to see the sights—Westminster Abbey, and Sir Christopher Wren's great church of St. Paul's, before all. There was Newgate, with perhaps a chance of witnessing an execution outside that grim and noisome gaol; there was the new built Mansion House, and the Monument with its lying inscription, and the Tower and the Exchange and the Guildhall, and the halls of the great liveried companies. And for fun and frolic there were the 'Gardens,' of which the citizens of London had always been fond. Merrymakers went in the afternoon and evening to Vauxhall, to Ranelagh in Chelsea, 'into which everybody that loves eating, drinking, starving, or crowding is admitted for a shilling,' to Bermondsey Spa Gardens, and to the gambling tables in Belsize Park, Hampstead,—and it was lucky if they got

back from the last place at night without being attacked by highwaymen. All these places, and many other pleasure resorts of that day, are now built over. But in the eighteenth century they were laid out in ornamental grounds, with a piece of water in the middle, with streets and quiet walks, and a stand for a band of music, to which the people danced and sang.

The soberer citizens, those that did not care for crowds and music and dancing, had every man his club. Thither he went every evening, and smoked his pipe, drank a jorum of punch, and, after hearing the current gossip of the town and the Exchange, went home to bed about ten o'clock. But if the Londoner of the eighteenth century was an inveterate club-goer, he was also a regular attendant at church. In the time of George II. there were a hundred and nine parish churches in London and Westminster, and at forty-four of these there was service every day. The age was a churchgoing one, but it was not a religious one. For 'the same men,' says Besant, 'who would gravely and earnestly, and with fervent prayers, discuss the meaning of a text, would take a share in a slaver bound for the Guinea coast and Jamaica, or go out and watch the flogging of a wretch at the cart-tail, or the hanging of a poor woman for stealing a loaf of bread, without a thought that they were doing or witnessing anything but what was right and laudable.'

6. **The People.**—The men—and the women, too—of the eighteenth century worked hard, played hard, and drank hard. Drink was the curse of the age. Every one drank: staid clergymen, ladies, and dignified merchants. They drank wine, but the lower classes, in the reigns of the first two Georges, stuck to beer. The great American statesman,

Benjamin Franklin, tells us that, when he was a printer in London, most workmen drank seven or eight pints of beer a day. Then came dram-drinking of gin: that began about the year 1730. There were seventeen thousand gin-shops in London, and rascally retailers offered men 'to be drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, and straw for nothing.' In the eighteenth century Londoners drank per head six times as much spirits as they do now, and it was estimated that there were at one time in England one hundred thousand people who lived on gin alone. This wholesale consumption of liquid poison—for the gin was often little better—was the main cause of the increase of brutality and of the coarseness of manners, for which the Georgian era has so evil a reputation. Those beginnings and attempts at moral reform, that were started in Queen Anne's reign, were dropped, and brutality once more reigned supreme. Men stood in the pillory, and the crowd pelted them with rotten eggs and all sorts of filth; both men and women were whipped through the streets, tied at the back of a cart; and the chiefest joy of a Londoner of the lower classes was to be present at an execution at Tyburn (near the present Marble Arch), or before Newgate, and mix in the drunken orgies that went on in front of the gallows.

7. **Criminals and Prisons.**—The drinking of London brought its inevitable results in the shape of misery and crime, and there was perhaps no time in the history of the city when criminals were more numerous, or when such open contempt was shown for the law. A few figures, better than anything else, will help us to realise this. It was estimated that during the reign of George II. there was stolen, in and about London, property to the value of £700,000 a year;

from his Majesty's dockyards and ships, goods were 'lost' to the extent of over £500,000; while the plunder from ships that unloaded into barges in the Thames—for as yet there were no docks—amounted to another half-million. This mass of stolen property passed into the hands of 'fences,' receivers of stolen goods, of whom it was reckoned that London alone harboured more than three thousand. And yet the law was mercilessly severe against every sort of crime. There were forty-eight different offences punishable by death; men, women, and even children were hanged for (amongst other things) shoplifting, for stealing linen, and for cutting hop vines. Sometimes there were so many miserable wretches lying under the death-sentence, that there was no room for them at the weekly gallows at Tyburn, and they were shipped off, practically as slaves, to the plantations in America. Minor offences (among which fire-raising was oddly enough counted as one) were punished by flogging, the pillory, and, more rarely, by imprisonment. But severity of punishment was not accompanied by any decrease in crime: hanging was no deterrent to the burglar, or to the hungry wretch who snatched a loaf from a baker's shop. Burglary, shoplifting, assaults by footpads, and highway robbery were daily occurrences. The coaches that ran to the villages of Hackney, Hampstead, and Islington were stopped by mounted highwaymen day after day; and once in broad daylight a gang of daring robbers seized the stage-wagon, that plied between Notting Hill and Tyburn, and plundered it of its contents, taking several hours over the job. At night it was unsafe to pass alone through Charing Cross, Fleet Street, Holborn, or St. Paul's Churchyard, for all these places were the favourite haunts of footpads. The criminal classes lived chiefly in the mean and crowded districts of Stepney, Whitechapel, Bishopsgate, Wapping, and Shadwell; and these places, lying as they did outside the jurisdiction of the city, were under no government or control whatsoever.

> 'In the year 1740 a body of rascals—all of them criminals—came over from the Mint in Southwark (which was a sanctuary) and established themselves on the east of Tower Hill. They drew lines on a map which marked the limitation of what was practically their fortress, and proclaimed the fact that any one who dared to serve a writ on any member of this worthy fraternity would do so at his own peril. One man was so unhappy as to serve a writ within the precincts of the 'New Mint.' The ruffians got up a procession, and marched straight away, without let or hindrance, to the man's house, which was somewhere in Whitechapel. They dragged him out, stripped him stark naked, and gave him a thousand lashes with birch-brooms. Yet in such wretched condition were the police, and law and order was such an absolute byword, that not a man was punished for the performance, and such bands of ruffians were the terror and absolute masters of the districts in which they took up their honoured residence.'—SIR WALTER BESANT.

8. From these nurseries of crime the gaols were kept well filled, but not with criminals alone. For the ordinary sorts of crime the punishment of imprisonment for any length of time was seldom inflicted, and prisoners under sentence of death had not long to stay in the condemned cell, before they were brought out and hanged by tens and twenties at the weekly hanging-day at Tyburn. Most of the permanent inhabitants of London gaols were poor debtors. The law stood then—and it was not abolished till 1869—that, if a man could not pay his debts in pocket, he should in person. So to prison he went, and in prison he stayed, herding with the vilest of both sexes, till the day came when he could pay his debts. But he could not pay his debts

whilst he was in prison, and it is easy to see that, for most of the unfortunate people so committed, the day was long of coming. The chief prisons for debtors were the **Fleet Prison,** the two **Compters** in Wood Street and Poultry, and the **King's Bench** and the **Marshalsea**[1] in Southwark.

9. And what did imprisonment mean in those days? It meant very often death—death by gaol fever, a most virulent form of typhus. The gaol fever often slew more than the hangman, and sometimes carried off judge, jury, counsel, and all the spectators in the densely packed courts as well. Nor can we wonder at it. The population of London had enormously increased, but the accommodation for prisoners had been at a standstill. Even as early as the fifteenth century we read of the atmosphere of the 'heinous gaol of Newgate' as being fetid and corrupt. How much worse, then, must it have been in the eighteenth century, when twelve prisoners were committed to prison for every one that lay there in earlier times? The prisoners had no windows to their cells, for every window was then subject to a tax; they got but little water, and that often so putrid that they could not drink it; they lay on filthy straw beds; and, tried or untried, they were loaded with fetters night and day. Fifty prisoners were sometimes locked up for the night in a room sixteen feet square, and those that survived suffocation perished afterwards by gaol fever. The London gaols, too, were generally let to private parties, who made what profit they could out of the miserable inhabitants. The keeper of the Marshalsea 'loaded with irons, tortured, and destroyed prisoners for debt under his care'; and, when the gaoler had wrung every

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[1] An account of the debtors' prison at the Marshalsea is to be found in Dickens's novel of *Little Dorrit*.

penny he could out of the unfortunate wretches committed to his charge, he handed them over to the savage cruelties of their fellow-prisoners. In most gaols a new comer was called upon by the older inmates of the gaol for 'garnish,' or 'footing,' and it was a case of 'pay or strip.' If he could not pay, his clothes were stripped off his back, and he was left in naked misery, forbidden to lie on the straw beds, to come near the fire, or to share in the doles of food made by the charitable, which was nearly all the hapless prisoners had to live upon. Such was the fate of a felon, or of an innocent debtor, who was committed to prison during the eighteenth century. The only bright spot in this tale of sordid misery is the noble attempts of the philanthropist, **John Howard**, in prison reform; and it is to his efforts that we owe the gradual abolition of the horrors of a London gaol.

(i) Howard himself died of gaol fever in the year 1790, at Kherson in Russia, having caught the disease from a prison he was inspecting at that place. But his works lived after him, and improvement came, but it came slowly, for as late as 1815, the year of Waterloo, another philanthropist reported of Newgate gaol that 'half the prisoners, and especially the women, were miserably poor, and scarcely covered with rags.'

(ii) Mention has been made of the city **Compters.** The word is derived from the Latin *computare*, to reckon, 'because, whosoever slippeth in there, must be sure to account, and pay well, too, ere he get out again.' We can see, then, how utterly unreasonable imprisonment for debt was. Not only was a prisoner committed to prison because he could not pay, but he was kept there, so that he became unable to pay.

10. **London and the King.**—Of the general history of London during the Georgian era there is very little to say. The two most important incidents in her history are the Story of the **South-Sea Bubble**, and the **Gordon Riots**, which will be noticed presently; and there only remains to say something of the last attempt on the part of the King of England to ride

roughshod over the city. The first two Georges were Germans, in ideas, in life, and (as often as they could manage it) in residence, and 'knew not their chief town.' But George III., as the citizens observed with pride, was an Englishman born, and seemed, therefore, to consider that this fact, and the absence of all internal dangers to his throne, warranted him in his attempts to behave in a high-handed way towards the free City of London. Yet the quarrel between the King and his capital did not go very deep. The city claimed the right of free criticism of the King's action, and the King, being, like all stupid men, both obstinate and touchy about his dignity, resented such interference. The dispute was really between the King and the country at large, but it so happened that London represented the popular party, and it was upon London, accordingly, that the brunt of the King's displeasure fell. But that was all: the King could only be displeased with the citizens or their representatives; the time for active tyranny was long past.

11. The first Pitt had always been the darling of the Londoners; and when he went to the Guildhall after resigning the premiership in favour of Lord Bute in 1761, 'the Londoners hung on his carriage wheels, hugged his footmen, and even kissed his horses.' The Common Council remonstrated mildly against Pitt's removal, but the King paid no attention. The bitterest dispute, however, between the King and the popular party in London arose over **John Wilkes.** Wilkes in his paper, the *North Briton*, had accused the ministers of putting a lie into the mouth of the King. For this piece of audacity he was arrested, and his paper was sentenced to be burnt by the common hangman; but, on being brought to trial, he was acquitted triumphantly, and,

when the hangman was attempting to burn the *North Briton* before the Royal Exchange, the mob tore the paper out of his hand. Wilkes then became the most popular man in London. The citizens regarded him as the champion of free speech, and of such criticism as they held they had a right to apply to the actions even of a King. He was returned to the House of Commons as member for Middlesex, and a favourite signboard all over London was the *Wilkes's Head*, though an old lady, as he used to relate himself, was heard to murmur, 'He swings everywhere but where he ought.' So the dispute dragged on,—the city protesting, and the King bidding it mind its own business. It reached its height when the corporation wished to present a petition against the American War, on the grounds that it interfered with business, that it was a war of brother against brother, and that it was scandalously conducted. At first the King refused to see Wilkes, who had now become Lord Mayor, at all; then he said he would see him at the next levee. Wilkes refused, and demanded that the King should receive the petition sitting on the throne. To which the King replied, 'I am the judge where.' And there the matter ended: the King would not give way, neither would the citizens; and the quarrel seemed to be after all an empty one. But it had its value in so far as it marked the right of the citizens of London (which has never been denied them since) of freely expressing their opinion of the policy of the King and his ministers.

12. **The South-Sea Bubble, 1720.**—On the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, peace was for a time confirmed between England, France, and Spain; and the people of England, and especially the wealthy merchants of London,

were able to largely increase their trade. Great numbers of joint-stock undertakings were formed—some of them sound and others rotten,—and among them one of the most famous was the **South-Sea Company**, founded in 1711. This company was to have the exclusive right of trading with South America, about the riches of which continent the English public had formed most extravagantly exaggerated notions. Hence shares in the South-Sea Company were eagerly bought up in all directions, and so far it was a perfectly legitimate commercial undertaking. About the same time politicians began to be anxious about the amount of the National Debt, which, at the end of Queen Anne's reign, amounted to about £52,000,000. The company then came forward with a proposal to advance seven and a half millions towards the liquidation of part of this debt, and in the year 1720 a bill was passed, enabling those to whom the nation owed money to accept shares in the company in place of their claim upon the nation. The Government was to guarantee the company £600,000 a year, a sum to be derived from import duties on vinegar, Indian goods, and tobacco; and the company, for their part, was to undertake to pay off £10,000,000 of the National Debt in twenty-six years. From this point honest commercial dealings had ceased, and a swindle had begun. The company had entered into vast engagements, and had only £30,000 in cash to back them. In vain did Sir Robert Walpole protest against the step. The bill passed, and received the royal assent on April 7, 1720.

13. Walpole opposed the bill on the ground that such an undertaking was mere speculation, and diverted the mind of the nation from legitimate trade and industry. Events soon proved he was right, and a mania for reckless speculation

seized hold of every class. Every one rushed to invest their pounds and even their sixpences in South-Sea stock—old and young, statesmen and errand-boys, noblemen and footmen. The directors, seeing how hot and eager was this race for wealth, made every effort to raise the price of their stock, by spreading about reports of the vast stores of gold and silver that yet lay untouched in South America, till by August the price of £100 stock was £1000. Cornhill was blocked with carriages, and in Exchange Alley you could hardly move for the crowd. In the alley, too, to diminish the crush within the Exchange itself, tables were set up for the sale of stock. Landlords sold their estates, and clergymen and poor widows ventured their little hoards, peeresses elbowed shop-boys—all in the frantic hurry to attain to a fortune. Every one was speculation mad, and, apart from the South-Sea scheme, ready and eager to invest money in any project, however absurd. Companies were started for making fresh water out of salt, for a wheel of perpetual motion, for making deal boards out of sawdust; and one enterprising rascal, confident in the gullibility of the times, started a company 'for carrying on an undertaking of great advantage, but nobody to know what it is.' Even for this last mad project £2000 was subscribed in cash, and then the company-promoter disappeared, and so did the £2000. The total number of companies was 156, and they represented a nominal capital of £500,000,000, which was five times as much money as there was then in actual circulation throughout the whole of Europe, and equal to twice the value of all the land in Great Britain.

14. The Government took alarm at this unusual mania for speculation, and in July summarily suppressed eighty-six of

these outside companies. This step indirectly sealed the fate of the South-Sea scheme itself. People began to argue that, if these minor companies were unsound, the great company might be so also. The alarm soon spread, and the South-Sea stock began to drop, and speculators to sell out. The stock went down to 700 in the first week of September, to 540 a few days later, and in a day or two more to 135. The difference £865 represented the loss on each share to those who had invested at the highest price. The bubble was burst, and thousands were plunged into instant ruin. Merchants and nobles committed suicide, and not London alone, but the whole country, suffered a financial shock that it did not recover from for years. Then the ruined dupes raised the cry for vengeance. One proposal was that the directors of the company should be put into sacks and flung into the Thames; indeed, no scheme of punishment seemed too severe for men who had wantonly involved the nation in such fearful distress. The punishment, however, was a comparatively light one: the directors were disqualified for ever from sitting in Parliament, and their property, to the amount of £2,000,000, was confiscated for the benefit of the ruined shareholders. Ultimately Walpole was called to the rescue, and made an arrangement which secured some little money out of the general wreck. But for most of the distressed, relief came too late: the debtors' prison claimed them for its own, and the South-Sea bubble meant for them penury, gaol fever, or poverty-stricken despair.

15. **The Gordon Riots, 1780.**—In the year 1778 some of the odious penal laws up to that time in force against the Roman Catholics were repealed. The zealous Protestants of Scotland were moved to indignation at this act of tolerant

justice; the alarm spread into England, and the 'No Popery' agitation there was headed by **Lord George Gordon,** a fanatic nobleman with a 'twist in his head.' Gordon was a member of the House of Commons, and spoke vehemently against the repeal of the Acts, adding that he had got a hundred and twenty thousand men at his back. But the House only laughed at the half-crazy ranter, and Lord George withdrew, threatening to exchange words for deeds. A monster meeting was convoked in St. George's Fields, Lambeth, and a mob of fanatics and desperadoes, sixty thousand strong, poured across the river by London, Westminster, and Blackfriars Bridges, to the Houses of Parliament. They brought with them a monster petition to lay before the members. Lord George presented the petition in the Lower House, and the unruly mob poured into the lobbies, and even attempted to force their way into the House itself. But Colonel Gordon, a near kinsman of Lord George, said, 'My Lord George, do you intend to bring your rascally followers into the House of Commons? If you do, the first man of them that enters I will plunge my sword, not into him, but into your body.' At this point a squadron of dragoons was summoned; the lobbies of the House were cleared of the unruly petitioners, and the mob retired to burn the private chapels of some Roman Catholic ambassadors. For this outrage thirteen of the ringleaders of the riot were arrested and lodged in Newgate.

16. All this happened on a Friday, June 2nd. On Sunday the disturbance broke out afresh. The chapels of the Roman Catholics in Moorfields were wrecked and burnt, and assaults on Roman Catholics in the streets and the plundering of their houses went on for two days more. Then on Tuesday

evening the cry was raised, 'To Newgate!' The riot by this time had got out of the hands of those who were animated merely by religious fanaticism, and was now engaged in, and directed by, the most dangerous criminals of London, who saw in it their chance of uninterrupted robbery and licence. The Governor of Newgate was summoned to surrender, and refused. Instantly fire was set to the main door, pickaxes and sledge-hammers were plied, and lighted brands were hurled over the walls of the prison to the terror of the inmates. Dickens, in his novel of *Barnaby Rudge*, paints the scene. 'At length the door gave way, and into the doomed building, which was by this time all ablaze, the rioters rushed pell-mell, yelling and shouting, brandishing their rude implements, and pouring through the vaulted corridors; beating at the doors of cells and wards; wrenching off, in their mad haste, bolts and locks and bars; endeavouring to drag the shrieking felons through impossible apertures; seizing them by their legs, their arms, their hair, and hauling them through the flames and smoke into the nearest breathing-place; whooping and wildly laughing, with a half-mad, hysterical laughter, and actually dancing in their delirious triumph.' This scene of violence was witnessed by the poor crazy nobleman, who sat in his coach, to which some of the mob had harnessed themselves, bowing frequently to those among the crowd who recognised him.

17. 'Newgate,' says the poet Crabbe, who witnessed the furious work, 'was at this time open to all: any one might get in, and, what was never the case before, any one might get out.' The fall of Newgate only whetted the appetite of the rioters. Their fury was no longer directed against Roman Catholic Chapels, but against the prisons of London

—Clerkenwell, the Fleet, the King's Bench, Bridewell, and the Borough Clink in Tooley Street. All these were set on fire, and the collected rascaldom within their walls was let loose upon the streets. The house of Mansfield, the Lord Chief Justice, in Bloomsbury Square, was gutted from roof to cellar, and his priceless law-library was made a bonfire of in the street. In Holborn, at the house of one Langdale, a Roman Catholic distiller, a terrible scene took place. The mob surged into the warehouse, staved in the casks of spirit, and allowed the contents to pour into the streets. Men, women, and children lapped at the stream of coarse spirit as it gushed forth, and fell down hopelessly intoxicated. Suddenly the place took fire, and a stream of burning liquid poured into the street, roasting alive the helpless drunkards as they rolled in the gutter. By Wednesday night London was on fire in twenty-six places. 'One might see,' says Dr. Johnson, 'the glare of conflagration fill the sky in many parts; the sight was dreadful.'

18. For six days London remained in the hands of the howling, drunken mob, and at last the authorities began to bestir themselves. Strong bodies of troops were posted at different points. But the riot had now attained such dimensions that it could not easily be stopped. The streets were to run red with blood first, and five hundred poor creatures were shot down by the soldiers. And so it all ended. Lord George Gordon was put on his trial for having maliciously levied war 'against the majesty of the King,' but, owing to the able defence of his counsel, was acquitted, and escaped the punishment which he so richly deserved. His followers were not so fortunate. A hundred and thirty-five of the more prominent rioters were arrested; half of them were

convicted, and twenty-one were hanged at Tyburn. In the year 1782 Newgate was rebuilt, and that building stood up to the year 1902. Lord George himself became an inmate of the new gaol in the year 1793, having been thrown into prison for libelling the Queen of France, and died there of gaol fever. Newgate, as a regular prison, now exists no longer, for in 1902 the eighteenth-century building was demolished, and on its site were erected new offices and court-rooms for the Central Criminal Court, with only temporary cell-accommodation for prisoners on trial. The new buildings, commonly known as the Court of the Old Bailey, were opened by King Edward VII. in 1907, and only the name of Newgate Street remains to keep alive the memory of the 'New Gate,' which used to be the principal west gate of the City. When Domesday Book was compiled in 1086, there was a vineyard outside the gate, for which one William the Chamberlain paid the King's Sheriff six shillings a year; in the next century, by the year 1188, the guardroom in the gate had begun to be used as a prison; Whittington's executors rebuilt it as a prison in the fifteenth century, and the statue of the famous Lord Mayor and his cat stood over Newgate in a niche till it crashed down in the Great Fire of 1666.

CHAPTER XII

OLD LONDON BRIDGE

1. From the very earliest times that we hear of the City of London, it was a centre of commerce. And to enable that commerce to be successfully and rapidly carried on, it was before all things necessary that the town should be joined to the country which lay to the south of it by a bridge. Whether there was a bridge or no before the Romans came, we do not know; probably there was. The Romans, at all events, who first taught the European world the lesson of building both bridges and roads, joined the Middlesex and Surrey sides of the river. But theirs was a bridge of wood, as was also a second, which was overwhelmed in the year 1091 by a fierce wind and a strong tide, and yet a third, which was well-nigh completely destroyed by fire in the year 1136.

2. Not till more than a hundred years after William the Conqueror first lay within the walls of London was a stone bridge thrown across the Thames. This was in the year 1176, and the architect was **Peter of Colechurch**, a small chapel which stood, before the Great Fire of 1666, on the north side of the Poultry.[1] Peter of Colechurch was probably a member of the Bridge-builders, a religious fraternity of France, to whom the building of bridges was enjoined as a sacred duty. When the work was once started, contri-

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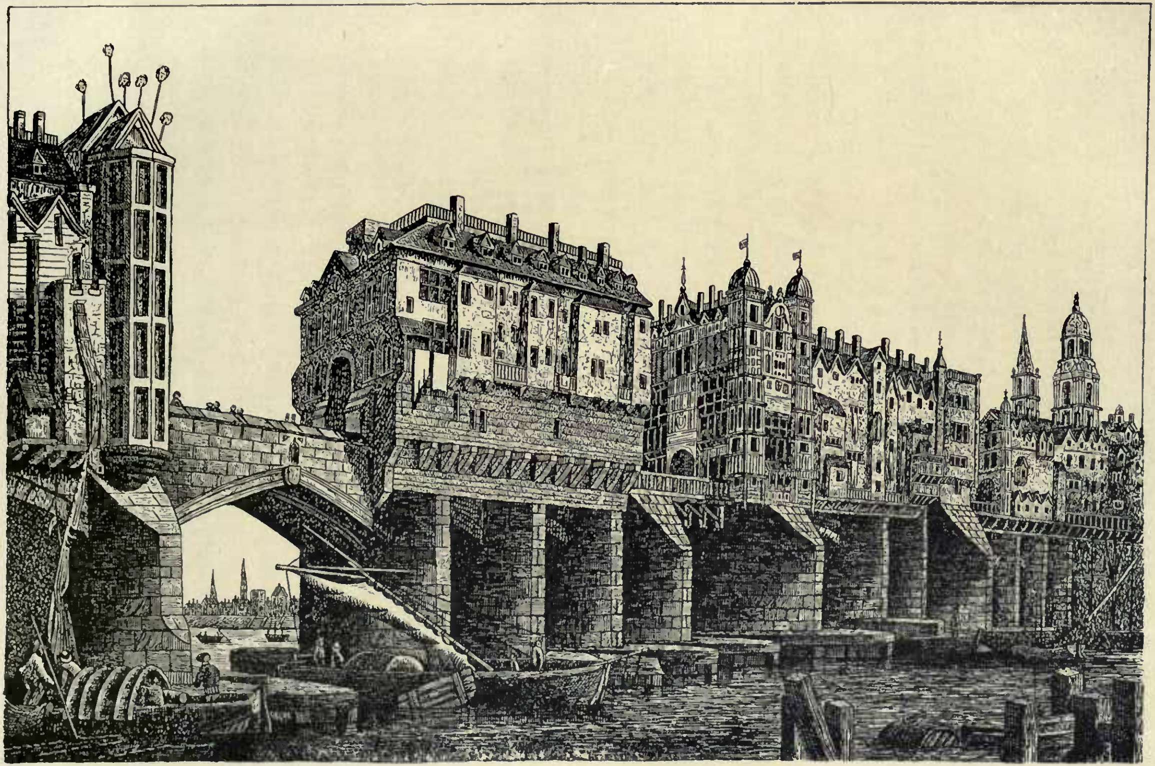
[1] So called from the poulterers' shops that stood there in the sixteenth century.



OLD LONDON BRIDGE, 1600

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butions to carry it on poured in from every quarter. The King and nobles helped it with money; Richard, Becket's predecessor in the See of Canterbury, gave a thousand marks, and part of a tax on wool was devoted to defraying the cost of foundation. Hence men said that 'London Bridge was built upon woolpacks.' Later on, the Bridge enjoyed a permanent revenue of its own derived from certain lands in Southwark, from the tolls on merchandise that was carried across it, and from the rents of houses that were built on either side of the roadway. Though Peter of Colechurch started the building, he did not live to see its completion. His body was laid to rest in a little chapel built on the bridge itself and dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury. In the year 1209 the work was finished, chiefly through the exertions of three wealthy citizens of London: Serlo the mercer, William Almaine ('the Foreigner'), and Benedict Botewrite. It took three-and-thirty years in building, and it stood for six hundred and twenty-two more. Then in the year 1831 it was pulled down to make room for its successor, the New Bridge, which was built some sixty yards west of the old.

3. And what did the Bridge look like when once it had been built? In length it extended for about a thousand feet, it was forty feet wide, and stood sixty feet above the level of the water. There were twenty arches all of different sizes, and at the southern end there was a drawbridge, which served the double purpose of allowing ships of large burden to pass up the river, and of preventing an enemy from entering the city. It was by pulling up this drawbridge that Sir Thomas Wyatt was shut out of London in 1557. The breadth of the bridge, forty feet, seems narrow enough, and it was made still narrower by houses which were built on either

side of and projected over the parapet. We may wonder, perhaps, for a moment, how it was that any traffic at all could pass over so narrow a bridge, especially when it supported a double row of houses. But for some hundreds of years London used no wheeled vehicles for the conveyance of goods, but carried in and took out her merchandise loaded on packhorses; and for them a very narrow alley-way between the houses was quite sufficient. The houses were mostly used as shops by haberdashers and dealers in smallwares, and, about the time of Henry VIII., by booksellers, paper-merchants, and stationers. After the Reformation, even the old chapel of St. Thomas of the Bridge, where the priestly builder lay buried, was occupied as a bookseller's shop.

4. As you have seen before, the Bridge was maintained by a private income, specially set apart for the repairs which were constantly necessary. 'A bridge imperfectly piled,[1] oppressed by its own weight of stone, by two rows of houses, and by age itself, required a good deal of cobbling and patching to keep it together.' One of the earliest things to be done, towards strengthening the structure and protecting the piers from the rush of the water, was to build out into the stream 'starlings,' or projecting buttresses of stone. Upon these starlings were built cornmills, and later on, in 1582, water-works which supplied a great part of the city with drinking-water. The bridge houses stood till the year of the Great Fire, when they were all destroyed. Some of them were rebuilt after that catastrophe, but in the year 1757 they were all pulled down, and the most striking feature of Old London Bridge was gone.

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[1] Piles were massive stakes driven into the bed of the river, on which the stone piers of the bridge rested.

5. **The Story of Edward Osborne.**—The houses on London Bridge were not all used as shops. Some of them were dwelling-houses, and in one there lived, in 1536, a wealthy cloth merchant, named **Hewit,** who was afterwards knighted, and became Lord Mayor of London. Hewit had an only daughter, Anne; and, as the nurse was one day dandling the baby over the parapet, she accidentally let her slip into the boiling tide-race sixty feet below. But happily **Edward Osborne,** one of her father's apprentices and the son of a worthy yeoman in Kent, saw the accident, instantly dived in, and brought the child safe to land. Anne Hewit grew up to be a woman, and, as she was a beautiful as well as a richly dowered girl, many suitors sought her hand in marriage. But, though she was sixteen years younger than her rescuer, Osborne she would have and no other; and her father, too, declared that 'Osborne had saved her, and Osborne should have her.' So they were married; and the prentice-lad, who had become a rich man, was made Sheriff of London in the year 1575, and in 1584 was chosen to be Lord Mayor, when he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth at Westminster. From this Osborne there sprung a family which still exists—the house of the Duke of Leeds; and thus the foundation of the prosperity and, indirectly, of the nobility of that family, was laid by the young prentice's plucky dive off Old London Bridge.

6. **Historical Events connected with the Bridge.**—In the year 1213 the Bridge again suffered from fire on the Southwark side; and more than three thousand people who had crowded on it to escape the flames were seized with a sudden panic and drowned in the Thames. Fifty years later the men of London stood upon the Bridge, and insulted and pelted

Eleanor, Henry the Third's queen, as she was attempting to go by boat from London to Westminster. Then, in 1305, the head of the Scottish patriot, **Sir William Wallace**, was exposed on the Tower-gate of the Bridge, the first of a long and grisly series. For here, too, was impaled in 1408 the head of the rebel, Earl Percy of Northumberland, and in 1450 the head of Lord Saye, who was murdered by Jack Cade and his rebellious crew. Jack Cade himself appeared there a little later in the same year. In the year 1535 **John Fisher**, Bishop of Rochester, was executed for refusing to acknowledge Henry VIII. as supreme head of the church. His head remained for fourteen days on the Bridge, and men told how it never lost colour through all that time, but that the cheeks still remained fresh and rosy. People flocked to see this miracle in such crowds that the traffic was impeded, and the executioner was commanded to throw the head, under cover of night, into the river. The head of another victim to Henry's cruelty very soon replaced that of Bishop Fisher—the wise and good **Sir Thomas More**. His daughter, Mrs. Margaret Roper, bribed one of the bridge-keepers to drop her father's head into a boat, as she was passing beneath. She reverently enclosed it in a leaden casket, and at her death the casket was placed in a niche in her tomb within Canterbury Cathedral, where it may be seen to this day.

7. On the Bridge, in the year 1390, was fought a famous passage of arms between two champions of their country's honour, the Scots Earl of Crawford, and a gallant Englishman, named Lord Wells. The knights were to meet on horseback at the north end of the Bridge, and the king and his court sat round in gorgeously decorated galleries, while

the people thronged to the sight in thousands. Twice the knights met in full career, and twice they shivered their lances against each other, but on the third onset the English champion was borne heavily to the ground. The Scots Earl at once jumped from his horse, and tenderly supported the body of the English knight in his arms, till the surgeon came up to staunch the wound. After the encounter the Earl of Crawford stayed on in England for three months, greatly honoured both by King and people.

8. As London Bridge was, till the middle of the eighteenth century, the only means of entry into the city, it was the scene of many a splendid pageant, as one victorious king or general after another passed over it to be welcomed by the citizens. And, though London was famous for pageants, there were few more glorious than that which greeted Henry V. on his return after Agincourt in 1415. The Lord Mayor and Aldermen, and twenty thousand horsemen, arranged according to their crafts, met the King at Blackheath, and rode with him towards the city. At the south end of the Bridge there stood a colossal statue, holding in its hand the axe and the keys of the city; and on the London side there was an image of St. George, the patron-saint of England, the dress of the image studded with precious stones. Every house upon the Bridge was decked with flags and streamers, and the echoes rang again with the sound of clarions, trumpets, and horns. A huge company of little boys dressed all in white, their faces gilded, and bearing glittering wings of gold, represented the heavenly host of cherubim and seraphim. As the King drew near, the company of white-clad boys burst into song, and they sang .—

Our King went forth to Normandy,
With grace and might and chivalry;
The God for him wrought marvellously,
Wherefore England may call and cry,
"Give thanks to God for victory."'

Many a victorious king and general has crossed the Bridge since then, and many a pageant have the bridge-houses witnessed in honour of the accession of one sovereign after another. It has been reserved for our day and for the new London Bridge to witness a pageant the like of which old London Bridge had never seen. And this was the pageant of peace which heralded the completion of Queen Victoria's sixtieth year of reign. The pageant of 1897 was in no manner as outwardly glorious, or as gaudily magnificent as the older pageants must have been, but the event which called it forth possessed in itself a glory that was unique in the history of England and in the history of the world.

CHAPTER XIII

THE TOWER OF LONDON

1. 'This Tower,' says John Stow, the Elizabethan historian of London, 'is a citadel to defend or command the city; a royal palace for assemblies or treaties; a prison of state for the most dangerous offenders; the only place of coinage for all England at this time; the armoury for warlike provisions; the treasury of the ornaments and jewels of the Crown; and the general conserver of the most records of the King's courts of justice at Westminster.' These lines sum up nearly all we need to know about the purpose and use to which the Tower was put. But in our days all these uses have fallen from it, except that it continues as the place wherein the Crown jewels — the Regalia — are deposited, and, as every visitor to the old Norman keep knows, there still exists within its walls an armoury, not now of modern 'warlike provisions,' but of the different sorts of weapons and armour that have been in use throughout the different ages.

2. As you have learnt before, the building of the Tower was due to **William the Conqueror.** The military genius of the Normans taught them that the erection of strong keeps or fortresses in different parts of the country was necessary to make strong their hold over England. In no place was such a fortress more necessary than at London, where the wealthy and warlike citizens might rise in rebellion at any moment.

Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester, was the architect, and he began the **White Tower**, or central keep, in the year 1078. William Rufus built a wall round it, and, to still further isolate the fortress and protect it against attacks from the citizens, during the reign of Richard Lionheart, a deep moat was thrown round the wall, which could be filled with water at every high tide. The moat continued to exist even into Queen Victoria's reign, but looked and smelt like an unwholesome sewer; it was finally drained and made into a garden, as we see it to-day, in the year 1843. The final fortification of the place was completed by Henry III.

The plan of the Tower, when it existed both as a fortress and a royal residence, was briefly this: outside there was the moat; on the inner side of this ran a battlemented wall, and then came a second wall, out of which sprang many protecting towers; there were four gates; and the centre of the whole fortress was the **White Tower**. The four gates were the Lion's Gate on the west side, which is still the principal entrance and where the lions and the royal menagerie were kept till 1834, the Water Gate, the Iron Gate, on the south-east corner, and the Traitors' Gate, a small postern with a drawbridge, facing the Thames, 'seldom let down but for the receipt of some great persons, prisoners.' It was under the Traitors' Gate that Queen (then princess) Elizabeth was brought in on the outbreak of Wyatt's rebellion. When the boat came to the stairs the princess would not land. The nobleman, in whose charge she was, told her shortly that she had no choice, and she passed under the gate in a heavy shower of rain. But the frowning look of the entrance dismayed her, and she sat down upon a stone in the rain, refusing to move and exclaiming, 'Better sit here than in a worse place.' But Elizabeth's fate was more fortunate than that of other political prisoners: few of them, once they had entered under the Traitors' Gate, came out again with their lives.

3. All the gates were strongly guarded by commanding towers and furnished with narrow passage-ways, especially the Lion's Gate, next to the city, so that any sudden inrush of the citizens should be rendered impossible. This is not the place to mention the names of the different towers. Indeed, merely to name them would be so much dry detail, and to say anything about them, however shortly, would be to write a great part of the history of England. For nearly every one of the smaller towers has some mournful association connected with it, and tells the story of the end of some great or unfortunate life. Thus the Bell Tower was the prison of the good Bishop Fisher, whose head remained fresh for a fortnight on London Bridge; Queen Elizabeth lay there too. In the Bloody Tower were murdered the two little princes, the sons of Edward IV., and here the Duke of Clarence was drowned in a butt of malmsey; and the Beauchamp (pronounced *Beecham*) Tower, which was once scratched all over with the inscriptions[1] of poor prisoners, was the prison of the beautiful Anne Boleyn. In the 'Lieutenant's lodgings,' in the south-west corner, Guy Fawkes and his fellow-conspirators were examined under torture.

4. But, apart from the Great White Tower itself, perhaps the most historically interesting spot is a little church on the west side, not far from the Beauchamp Tower. This is **St. Peter's ad Vincula**—a mean little building, disfigured and entirely altered by successive improvements and restorations,

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[1] The Beauchamp Tower was restored in 1854; the inscriptions were then removed, and, with an extremity of stupidity, placed all together in one room.

but one within whose walls many an illustrious body lies buried. 'There is,' says Macaulay, 'no sadder spot on earth than this little cemetery.' Before the high altar lie, or lay, 'two Dukes between two Queens, to wit the Duke of Somerset and the Duke of Northumberland between Queen Anne (Boleyn) and Queen Katherine (Howard), all four beheaded.' Thomas Cromwell, the once powerful minister of Henry VIII., the Lady Jane Grey and her young husband Guildford Dudley, Robert Devereux,[1] the ill-starred favourite of Queen Elizabeth, and the weak and unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, all lie here in this last resting-place of 'fallen greatness and of blighted fame.' Not all of these, however, suffered death within the precinct of the Tower itself. Most of them were executed outside the walls on Tower Hill on the north-west of the fortress. Here stood a permanent scaffold for the execution of traitors or transgressors that were delivered out of the Tower into the hands of the sheriffs of London. Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More were put to death here in the year 1535; and More, who was so weak that he could not unassisted ascend the scaffold steps, said hurriedly to the Lieutenant of the Tower, 'I pray you, master lieutenant, see me safe up, and for my coming down let me shift for myself.' The death-roll of Tower Hill includes the names of the Earl of Surrey, the poet; of Sir Thomas Wyatt, whose ill-timed rebellion sealed the fate of Lady Jane Grey; of Strafford, the unscrupulously able minister of Charles I.; and of the two Jacobite lords, Kilmarnock and Balmerino, who were implicated in the rebellion of 1745. 'Kilmarnock,' says Horace Walpole, writing to a friend at the time, 'was executed first, and then the scaffold was

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[1] Devereux Court and Essex Street, off the Strand, are named after this man.

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immediately new strewn with sawdust, the block new covered, the executioner new dressed, and a new axe brought. Then old Balmerino appeared, treading the scaffold with the air of a general, and reading undisturbed the inscription on his coffin.' Simon, Lord Lovat, was also executed on Tower Hill in 1747 for taking part in the same Jacobite rebellion, and was the last person beheaded in England.

(i) The **Tower** was once the storehouse of our **National Archives**, before the building of the Record Office in Fetter Lane, Fleet Street. A disused chapel in the White Tower was full of them, and there were also large numbers of papers in the Beauchamp and Bloody Towers.

(ii) Of **St. Peter's Church**, which has been transformed by barbarous restoration into 'the likeness of a meeting-house in a manufacturing town,' Macaulay says: 'Thither have been carried through successive ages, by the rude hands of gaolers, without one mourner following, the bleeding relics of men who had been the captains of armies, the leaders of parties, the oracles of senates, and the ornaments of courts.'

(iii) The Tower was used as a **Menagerie** almost as soon as it was built; and the Tower collection formed the nucleus of the present Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park. Hence arose the phrase of 'seeing the lions.' Henry III. compelled the sheriffs of London to provide for a white bear from Norway. They had to furnish for the bear's keep 'four pence daily, with a muzzle and iron chain, to keep him when on land, and a stout cord to hold him when a-fishing in the Thames.' Think of a white bear fishing in the Thames off the Tower at the present day!

'At the time when an allowance for an esquire was one penny a day, a lion had a quarter of mutton and three halfpence for the keeper; and afterwards sixpence was the lion's allowance; the same for a leopard, and three halfpence for the keepers.'—CLARK.

(iv) The visitor to the Tower is conducted over the armouries and other places by men dressed in a peculiar uniform, and known as beefeaters. What the origin of the term is, is quite unknown, but the uniform they wear is the dress of the yeomen of the guard in the time of Henry VIII.

5. **The Story of Colonel Blood.**—Thomas Blood, who was born in the year 1618, served with some distinction as a soldier of the Commonwealth, and received for his services

a grant of land in Ireland. But, on the restoration of King Charles II., the estates of the old Commonwealth soldiers were taken from them. Blood, among others, was deprived of his, chiefly, as he believed, owing to the exertions of James, Duke of Ormond. Blood retired to Holland, where he lived the life of a soldier of fortune, bully, and gamester, but never allowing his desire for vengeance against the Duke of Ormond to be lulled to sleep. More than once he openly gave out that he would hang the Duke with his own hands at Tyburn. In time Blood found his way back to London, and in the purlieus of Alsatia (now Whitefriars Street) enlisted the services of some other cut-throats like himself to assist in his vengeance on the Duke. On the night of December the sixth, 1670, the conspirators waylaid the Duke near Piccadilly, dragged him from his carriage, mounted him on horseback, and set off with him towards the gallows at Tyburn. But on the way the Duke, who was riding pillion behind one of the ruffians, lifted his captor out of his stirrup with his foot, and both fell to the ground. Blood fired twice at his enemy, but missed, and in the midst of the struggle the Duke's servants arrived on the scene, and the would-be murderers galloped off. A price of a thousand pounds was put on the arch-villain's head, but he successfully evaded arrest, only to concoct a new crime even more daring than the last.

6. The warder of the Crown jewels in the Tower was an old man of the name of Talbot Edwards. A few months after the attack on the Duke of Ormond a sober-faced clergyman and his wife came to Edwards and asked to see the Regalia. The visitors, who were Blood in disguise and a female accomplice, saw the jewels, and just after the inspection the lady was taken suddenly ill, and Mrs. Edwards was

kind enough to soothe her suffering with a dram of brandy. This laid the foundation of a friendship between the pretended clergyman and the Edwardses. The acquaintance ripened so quickly, that the 'Rev. Mr. Blood,' observing that the keeper had a pretty daughter, mentioned that he also had a nephew at his disposal, and that an excellent match might be made up between the two. Edwards was willing enough, and on May the ninth, 1671, the clergyman was to bring his nephew to see the young lady at seven in the morning. At that hour Blood with three confederates met at the keeper's house, and, as Mrs. Edwards and her daughter had not yet come downstairs, a visit was proposed to the Beauchamp Tower where the jewels were kept. One of the robbers stood watch at the door, and Blood and the other two, once the keeper was safe within the room, swore they would murder him unless he held his tongue and allowed the jewels to be removed. But the brave old man—with a shawl over his head and a hook through his nose—cried out as lustily as he could, till the robbers, fearful of his raising an alarm, knocked him senseless with a mallet and ran him through the body with a sword. Having left him for dead, they got to work with the plunder. Blood hid the crown under his cloak, Parrot, an old Parliamentarian soldier, put the orb in his trousers' pocket, and Hunt began to file the sceptre in two to get it into a bag. Just at this moment steps were heard on the stairs outside; the old man recovered his senses, gave the alarm, and Blood had to run. Horses were waiting for the robbers, but before they could reach them they were grappled with, and Blood and Parrot were made prisoners. Yet even then Blood struggled awhile before he gave up the crown, boastfully exclaiming, 'It was a gallant attempt, however unsuccessful, for it was for a crown.' Hunt was captured soon afterwards.

7. When the news of this daring attempt got abroad, King Charles—so goes the story—was so astounded at the impudent audacity of the Colonel that he resolved to examine him himself. But it is more than probable that the King himself knew more about the plot than he cared to let everybody know: he was always in straits for money, and he would stick at very little to procure it. For what was the result of the examination? Blood, with insolent composure, informed the King that, if any harm came to him for this attempt on the Crown jewels, there were hundreds of his associates who had sworn together, for religious motives, to take the King's life, and that he, Blood, was the only one who held their daggers back. This astonishingly impudent plea procured Blood's pardon, and, more than that, a pension of £500 a year for life; while Edwards, half murdered in defence of the jewels, got a grant of £200, and his son, who had pursued the robbers, £100. Thus this man who was, as Sir Walter Scott says, 'a robber from his cradle, a murderer since he could hold a knife, a profound hypocrite in religion, and a worse and deeper hypocrite in honour,' not only got off scot-free from all consequences of his crimes, but was even received into good society, and became an influential go-between in the dispensing of royal patronage.

Evelyn, who kept a diary throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century, and who once met Blood at a dinner-party, describes him as having 'not only a daring but a villainous unmerciful look,' and also as being 'very well spoken and dangerously insinuating.' 'He was,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'tall, strongly built, and his countenance, but for the heavy cloud which dwelt upon it, might have been pronounced a handsome one.'

CHAPTER XIV

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

1. **Old St. Paul's.**—Upon the most elevated piece of ground in the heart of the city stands the Eastminster of London, so called to distinguish it from that other great church which looks over the river-bank—Westminster Abbey. But the name of Eastminster has long since been forgotten, and we know the church now, as it has been known for more than a thousand years, under the name of **St. Paul's.** A church was standing on the same spot about the year 610, when Mellitus was consecrated as the first Bishop of London. This one was burnt down in 961, rebuilt the next year, and destroyed once more by fire in 1087. Then, under the guidance of Bishop Maurice, Old St. Paul's was begun, and the building of it took nearly the whole of two centuries. The old cathedral was one of the largest churches in Europe, for at that time many of the great continental churches had not been begun, and some of them indeed are not finished yet, or were (like Cologne Cathedral) only recently completed. The length of it was 600 feet; it was rather broader than the present building, and a lofty timber spire, covered with lead, towered 520 feet into the sky. The church was set in the midst of a spacious walled enclosure; in the crypt below the choir was the parish church of St.

Faith's, and, where the ground sloped down to Ludgate Hill, the parish church of St. Gregory. In a great fire of the year 1561 the wooden spire perished, and much damage was done to the body of the building itself. Parts of it were allowed to crumble into ruins, and the Lord Protector Somerset was even permitted to help himself to the tumbled masonry, when he was building his splendid palace of Somerset House. It was this same Somerset, too, that caused a large quantity of the remains of dead people to be removed from St. Paul's churchyard; a thousand cartfuls of bones were taken away, and spread over Finsbury Fields.

2. **St. Paul's Cross.** — At the north-east corner of the present church there is still to be seen a flat stone. This marks the site of the old Cross of St. Paul's—a timber pulpit surmounted by a cross, covered with a cone-shaped leaden roof, and led up to by a flight of steps. This was one of the central meeting-places in London. Here were proclaimed royal marriages, and from the steps were given out the news of great victories. Every Sunday morning sermons were preached from the cross, the congregation standing round, or sitting in orderly rows of camp-stools. We do not know when a cross was first erected on the spot. There was one there in the year 1256, and sermons continued to be preached from it as late as the year 1643. It was then taken down to be repaired, but, in consequence of the Great Fire, never rebuilt.

3. The Cross played a great part in furthering the Reformation in England. From it Latimer preached his stirring sermons in English, and there the famous Rood of Boxley was broken to pieces—a crucifix the eyes and lips of which were made by some ingenious mechanism to move, so as to

impose on ignorant people. The pulpit was often put to political uses. In the year 1483 Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who was then preparing to seize the crown, persuaded a popular preacher to sound the wishes of the people on the subject. The preacher was to hint that the Duke was really the legitimate successor to the throne. At that very moment the Duke was to show himself among the congregation, when the people would cry King Richard! King Richard! 'that it might have been after said,' says Sir Thomas More, 'that he was specially chosen by God, and in manner by miracle.' But the manœuvre was unsuccessful, owing to Richard's not turning up at the critical moment. Queen Mary, on her accession, sent her own chaplain, Bourne, to preach from the cross in favour of the Roman Catholic religion; but he had not got very far in his sermon before a dagger was hurled at him, and a little later some fervent Protestants pulled him by main force out of the pulpit.

On Ash Wednesday, in 1565, the preacher of the day, Dean Nowell, had Queen Elizabeth for one of his congregation. Unluckily he touched on a topic that did not meet with the royal approval. 'Leave that alone!' cried the Queen. The Dean did not hear her and went on. Then Elizabeth, raising her voice, 'To your text, Mr. Dean. To your text! Leave that; we have heard enough of that! To your subject!' The preacher, deeply colouring, could not but obey. Then the Queen flounced away in a fury, and most of the congregation burst into tears.

4. **Paul's Walk.** — The central aisle of St. Paul's was generally known as Duke Humphrey's Walk, or Paul's Walk. For more than two hundred years—from the middle of the fifteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century—this was

a common lounging place and promenade for the dandies of the town, and a great business resort as well, where nearly as much business was done as in Sir Thomas Gresham's Bourse itself. 'It was the fashion of these times,' says Osborn, 'for the principal gentry, and men of all professions, not merely mechanic, to meet in the Church by eleven, and walk in the middle Aisle till twelve, and after dinner from three to six, some discoursing of business, others of news. And, in regard of the universal commerce, there happened little that did not first or last arrive here.'

Indeed, to people during the reigns of James and Charles I., the Walk filled the place that was afterwards taken by the coffee-houses of Queen Anne, and was to them all that the club-houses are now in the reign of King Edward. Had we seen Paul's Walk in those days, it would have been difficult to imagine that we were in a church. Here you might have seen a group of choir-boys clamorously demanding money of a gentleman for coming into the church with his spurs on; advertisements—often not of a seemly nature—were posted up on the pillars; men tramped through, carrying baskets of bread, fish, and fruit, and leading mules, horses, and other animals; and children played about among the arches. The clergy within the choir complained that their voices could not be heard sometimes for the uproar, and that 'neither prayer nor sermon reached the ears of the congregation.' Against this scandalous state of matters Charles I. interfered in the year 1633. He issued an edict that no one should walk in the nave during service, that hucksters and pedlars should not be allowed inside the church, and that children should play elsewhere. To take the place of the Walk he commissioned the great architect,

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Inigo Jones, to build a spacious portico at the west end of the cathedral, which should serve the same purpose.

5. **St. Paul's of to-day.**—King Charles's new portico was intended to be part of a general restoration of the whole cathedral, but the King had very soon more to occupy him than the rebuilding of churches, and the work of restoration went no further. When Cromwell's army lay in the city, St. Paul's became a barrack for cavalry soldiers, who quartered themselves and their horses there. After Charles II. had come back to his own, a fresh attempt was made to restore the church, and a fund was raised by subscription for the purpose; but, before anything could be done, the Great Fire came, and Old St. Paul's was burned to the ground.

> 'The daring flames peeped in, and saw from far
> The awful beauties of the sacred quire:
> But since it was profaned by Civil War,
> Heaven thought it fit to have it purged by fire.'—DRYDEN.

For nine years after the fire the cathedral stood in ruins, till in the year 1675, the commission was given to **Sir Christopher Wren** to rebuild the great church as we see it to-day. The work was finally completed in 1710, though the building operations were sufficiently far advanced for divine service to be held, for the first time for thirty years, in 1697. Sir Christopher Wren lived to look upon the completion of what he had begun; and it is a curious fact that this enormous work was finished by one architect, was directed throughout by one master-mason, and completed during the tenure of office of one bishop. The whole cost—over a million and a half pounds—was paid for by a tax on every chaldron of coal that entered the port of London: and of the money so raised the smoky coat, which St. Paul's always wears, is a perpetual memorial. The church cost a million and a half, and its builder was rewarded with £200 a year.

6. 'Other edifices,' says the great American writer, Hawthorne, of St. Paul's, 'may crowd close to its foundation, and people may tramp as they like about it, but still the great cathedral is as quiet and serene as if it stood in the midst of Salisbury Plain.' It is true that the houses cluster too closely round its base, and that the cathedral does not stand in a grand open space, which lends so much beauty to other great churches of Europe. But St. Paul's still remains the greatest and the most imposing building of London. We cannot here say anything about the detail of so vast a building: every one who goes a-sightseeing in London, has made, or will make, acquaintance with it for himself. But we may learn something about St. Paul's as one of the two great burying-places of the nation—Westminster Abbey is the other.

7. England's boast is her dominion of the sea, and here—in England's greatest church—we find some of the most famous sailors lying buried. Just before the battle of Trafalgar, **Nelson**, in a great spirit of prophecy, exclaimed, 'A peerage or Westminster Abbey!' But his remains lie in St. Paul's, enclosed in a wooden coffin made out of the mainmast of the French flagship, *Orient*, which was captured at the battle of the Nile. In St. Paul's, too, to bear him company, stand the statues or monuments of his friend, Lord Collingwood, of Admiral Duncan, the victor of Camperdown, of Admiral Earl Howe, the hero of the glorious First of June,[1] and of many other sailors of renown.

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[1] The French fleet was defeated by Howe off Ushant, June 1st, 1793.

There also is the tomb of **Wellington**, and the memorials of many a great soldier beside: of Sir Henry Lawrence, who was killed in the defence of Lucknow, 1857, of Sir John Moore, the hero of the magnificent retreat on Corunna in 1809, of George Elliott, Lord Heathfield, who defended Gibraltar for us against the combined forces of France and Spain, and of the good General Gordon, who was murdered at Khartoum in 1885 by the fanatical troops of the Mahdi. Among men of letters there are monuments to Dr. Johnson and to Hallam, the historian; to Sir Joshua Reynolds and Turner, among painters; and to the philanthropist, John Howard, who did so much to alleviate the miseries of the poor prisoners that were confined in our fetid English gaols. And finally, as the body of Peter of Colechurch was laid to rest in a chapel on his life-work, Old London Bridge, so St. Paul's holds the remains of its great architect, **Sir Christopher Wren.** Over his tomb is set this inscription in Latin: 'Do ye seek for his monument? Then look around you!'

We have seen before how each great church, or religious house, was complete in itself, and maintained a large establishment of servants and church-officers. Thus St. Paul's supplied all the necessities of its own immediate population—baked its own bread, brewed its own beer (St. Paul's brewhouse had to furnish 200 gallons of beer each day), and illuminated and bound its own books. The work-people and others who were connected with the Cathedral all lived in the Cathedral precinct, as some of the names of the present streets still testify. Thus we find **Dean's Court, Doctors' Commons,** and **Godliman Street,** which are still quiet oases among the bustle and hum of the great city. In the present day, at the door of continental churches, may be seen the stalls of those who sell strings of beads, crucifixes and candles for use in the Cathedral. These articles were at one time to be procured in **Paternoster Row** (our Father Row), which is now inhabited chiefly by book-publishers. It was so called, says Stow, 'because of the stationers or text-writers that dwelled there, who wrote and sold all sorts of (religious) books then in use.' At the end of Paternoster Row, we find **Ave Maria** (Hail! Mary!) **Lane**, where text-writers and bead-makers also lived, and, at the end of that lane, **Creed Lane**, and **Amen Corner** not far off. There is one street-name, however, in this neighbourhood, which does not suit with the ecclesiastical character of the others: this is **Warwick Lane**, where once stood the house of the Earl of Warwick, the Kingmaker. In this house the great Earl lodged with six hundred of his retainers, 'all in red jackets, embroidered with ragged staves before and behind.' In the kitchen of Warwick House, as many as six oxen were roasted of a morning for breakfast, and any man, that had an acquaintance in the house, could come in and carry off as much meat, roast or boiled, as would go on a long dagger.

CHAPTER XV

THREE GREAT LONDON STREETS—PALL MALL, THE STRAND, FLEET STREET

1. **Pall Mall.**—The broad and noble thoroughfare which extends from the foot of St. James's Street to the foot of the Haymarket, and which contains some of the handsomest buildings in London, received its name from a game which was played there. The game of pall mall was introduced into England from France during the reign of Charles I. It seems to have been a sort of cross between golf and croquet, and the art was to drive a ball with a mall, or mallet, through a high arch of iron: he who could do this in the least number of strokes won the game. To this sport Charles II. was passionately attached, and made for himself a private mall, or playing walk, on the north side of St. James's Park. This road is still called the **Mall.**

One of the first mentions of Pall Mall occurs in Pepys's great *Diary*, under date of July 20, 1660: 'We went to Wood's at the Pall Mall (our old house for *clubbing*) and there we spent till ten at night.' This reference is interesting not only as showing that Pall Mall was beginning to be built upon at a time when Bond Street was overgrown with bushes, but also because we have in it the first mention of the word 'clubbing' used in its modern meaning. There were clubs in Pall Mall in Pepys's time, and in our own time

Pall Mall is still the home of clubs. It is in fact often called club-land. On the left side, going west, nearly every great house you pass is a club; and the fine architecture of most of them gives to Pall Mall a stateliness possessed by no other London street.

2. **The Strand,** now one of the busiest thoroughfares in London, means just what its name implies. It was the strand or sloping bank of the river Thames. Even as early as the seventh century there was an abbey church and probably a small settlement on swampy Thorney, or Westminster, as it is called now, and a thoroughfare was necessary to connect that place with the City of London. Between the two lay the small hamlet of Charing—now Charing Cross—at which spot, so said Dr. Johnson, sets 'the full tide of human existence.' The village church of Charing was St. Martin's-in-the-Fields.

Very early, therefore, in the history of London the Strand became a much used highway; but it was nearly always in an execrable condition, full of ruts and mudholes that were dangerous alike to foot-passenger and horseman. Not until the reign of Henry VIII. was an act of parliament passed (1553) for 'paving the streetway between Charing Cross and Strand Cross, at the charge of the owners of the land.' The highway was crossed by two small rivulets, the bridges over which are still commemorated in the two names of Ivybridge Lane and Strandbridge Lane.

3. But the favourite highway of the Londoners was always the Thames—it was pleasanter and safer to go by boat than to be jolted in springless vehicles over ill-made and ill-kept roads—and so the ground near the river became the favourite residence of the great English nobles. But a continuous

street of houses did not exist before the time of Elizabeth, and even then, to the north, open green meadows stretched from Lincoln's Inn Fields to the little country church of St. Giles'-in-the-fields. Late into the eighteenth century there was but a straggling collection of houses from Charing Cross eastward. A man with a telescope used to stand in Leicester Fields—now Leicester Square—and offer, for a charge of a halfpenny, a peep at the heads of the Jacobite rebels which were stuck on spikes on Temple Bar.

The earliest inhabitant of a house in the Strand that we know of was Peter of Savoy, uncle to Henry III.'s Queen, and he has left his name to a chapel and a street. After him different bishops built palaces on the river bank, being emboldened so to build outside the walls of the city, 'because they were held sacred persons whom nobody would hurt.' The powerful nobles lay within the city for safety's sake, for there their persons and their houses were comparatively secure against the possible attack of some equally powerful rival. But in time, as civilisation advanced and law and order became firmly established, the easy access to the river attracted them to the Strand; and at the beginning of the seventeenth century the sloping ground that ran down to the then clear-flowing Thames was covered with stately houses.

4. The last of these, that was still standing some thirty years ago, was **Northumberland House**,[1] on the right hand side of Charing Cross railway station. Of the others everything is gone, save their names, which are preserved in the names of the present streets. Thus **Essex Street** and **Devereux Court** occupy the site of the house where the Earl of Essex planned his mad rebellion against Elizabeth, his queen and

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[1] Built about the year 1605.

patron. On the ground covered by Surrey Street, Norfolk Street, Arundel Street, and Howard Street, stood **Arundel House**, the palace of the great Dukes of Norfolk, whose family name is Howard. Somerset House is on the site of the palace which the Lord Protector Somerset built for himself in the reign of Edward VI.; here, in the year 1658, the body of Oliver Cromwell lay in state, and the people 'threw dirt in the night on his escutcheon that was placed over the great gate.' The names of **Burleigh Street** and **Exeter Hall** remind us of the eldest son of Elizabeth's great minister, who was created Earl of Exeter; and the younger son, Sir Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, had a house on the ground now covered by Cecil Street and Salisbury Street. Near the houses of the Cecils was the 'Convent Garden,' which belonged to the abbot and monks of Westminster; this is now **Covent Garden**, London's great fruit and flower market, which was, in the early part of the eighteenth century, a favourite football ground for the prentices. Of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the reckless and splendid favourite of James I. and 'baby Charles,' there are abundant memorials in the street names of George Street, Villiers Street, Duke Street, and Buckingham Street. In or near Craven Street was the residence of a Lord Craven, a celebrated soldier in the Thirty Years' War. At number twenty-seven in that street lived James Smith, part author of those famous parodies, the *Rejected Addresses*. It was inhabited by a large number of lawyers, on whom Smith wrote:—

'In Craven Street, Strand, ten attorneys find place,
And ten dark coal-barges are moored at its base;
Fly! Honesty! fly! seek some safer retreat,
For there's *craft* in the river, and *craft* in the street.'

The reply to the epigram ran thus:—

> 'Why should Honesty fly to some safer retreat,
> From attorneys and barges, 'od rot 'em?—
> For the lawyers are *just* at the top of the street,
> And the barges are *just* at the bottom.'

(i) In front of the church of St. Mary-le-Strand one of the great **Maypoles** of London once stood. The story goes that it was set up by John Clarges, a farrier, whose daughter, Nan, afterwards became the Duchess of Albemarle. The Puritans removed it shortly after the execution of Charles I., but it came back again with the Restoration. The Duke of York sent twelve sailors to assist in putting it up, and the task was successfully accomplished to the sound of drums and trumpets, and amid the joyful shouts of the people, that 'did ring throughout all the Strand.' Then a company of morris-dancers, gaily bedecked in purple scarfs, danced around the Maypole, and 'little children did much rejoice, and ancient people did clap their hands, saying, "Golden days begin to appear."

(ii) **Temple Bar** was a stone gateway which stretched right across the Strand, between the end of that thoroughfare and the beginning of Fleet Street. Anciently it marked the boundary between the City of London and the City of Westminster. In 1879 it was found such an intolerable hindrance to the traffic, that it was taken down, and a griffin on a pedestal erected in its place. From the years 1670 to 1772 Temple Bar was adorned with the heads of various people who suffered death for rebellion or for other offences. The heads of the Jacobite rebels of 1745 were exposed there, and remained stuck on spikes and roughly embalmed with pitch, for twenty-seven years. When the sovereign has occasion to visit the city, the Lord Mayor meets him at Temple Bar, and hands over the sword of the city to the King or Queen, who graciously returns it. Queen Elizabeth was so met when she was going to St. Paul's to return thanks for the repulse of the Armada: and more than three hundred years later, in 1897, the Lord Mayor of London welcomed another and a greater Queen at the same place, and escorted her on horseback to a second thanksgiving service at the cathedral church of London.

5. **Fleet Street.**—Fleet Street derives its name from the small river called the Fleet (or, in its upper course, the Holebourne), which entered the Thames near the present site of Blackfriars' Bridge. The rapid little streamlet became,

as the city grew, an open, noisome ditch, and is now a covered sewer, one of the largest in London. Over the stream a bridge was built, in the year 1431, to connect Fleet Street with Ludgate Hill, and a bridge still remained at the same place till 1765. Fleet Street was always an important thoroughfare, both because it was, and is, the continuation of the street that joined London to Westminster, and further, because barges, laden with merchandise, could ascend the river as far as Holborn. We know it now as the street in which are placed the offices of many of the great London newspapers; but with the people of Queen Elizabeth's time it was famous for the number of waxworks (like the present Madame Tussaud's in the Marylebone Road) and moving exhibitions or panoramas. Till a few years ago there was still a show of cheap wax figures on the north side near St. Dunstan's Church, so that Fleet Street has kept up its reputation in this respect for well-nigh three hundred years. Like the Strand, the thoroughfare that ran westward from the right bank of the Fleet was the scene of many a famous procession and splendid pageant. Queen Mary rode through it on the day before she was crowned at Westminster Abbey; Charles II., on his restoration, rode along the same street through the midst of rapturously enthusiastic crowds; a great procession was held there after the battle of Waterloo; and the Prince of Wales passed through in 1872, on his way to St. Paul's to give thanks for recovery from his almost fatal illness.

6. Not far from Fleet Street, on the east side of Farringdon Street (once known as Fleet Market), and near the entrance to the old Fleet Bridge, stood the infamous **Fleet Prison**, which was finally pulled down in the year 1844.

The prison was at first used for prisoners who were committed by the Court of the Star Chamber, but was afterwards devoted only to the reception of debtors, and bankrupts, and persons charged with contempt of court. The life inside the prison was wretched and squalid in the extreme; and those prisoners, who could afford to pay for the privilege, were allowed to live in the neighbourhood that immediately surrounded the prison. This district was known as the '**Rules of the Fleet**,' and there these privileged persons had nearly complete liberty, only that they were never permitted to leave the Rules. It was in this wretched neighbourhood—the home of broken-down gamesters, distressed gentlefolk, and degraded clergymen—that the notorious '**Fleet Marriages**' used to be celebrated. Those who would like to learn all about these marriages and about the life of the place, must read Sir Walter Besant's novel, *The Chaplain of the Fleet.*

The scandal of the Fleet marriages, the first record of which dates from the year 1674, was especially bad during the eighteenth century. 'In the reign of George II.,' says Sir George Trevelyan, 'the scandal of the old marriage laws had come to a head. . . . The vision of a broken-down parson, ready, without asking questions, to marry any man to any woman for a crown and a bottle, was an ever-present terror to guardians and parents.' In the *Grub Street Journal* of 1735 we read: 'There are a set of drunken, swearing parsons, with their myrmidons, who wear black coats, and pretend to be clerks and registers of the Fleet, and ply about Ludgate Hill, pulling and forcing people to some peddling ale-house or brandy-shop to be married—even on a Sunday. Stopping them as they go to church, and almost tearing their clothes off their backs.' This is no exaggeration.

These infamous Fleet parsons stuck at nothing. Young men and women of position were decoyed into their clutches, and brides or bridegrooms were provided for them at the shortest notice; sometimes even marriage certificates were given where no marriage had taken place at all.

7. There is a story told of a lady, who was driving in a coach to the city, when a gentleman jumped in beside her, saying that he could find no other coach, and that he would be obliged if she would give him a lift. The lady consented, and by some means or other the man persuaded her to stop for a few minutes at a house near Ludgate Hill. There a 'tawny fellow, in a black coat and a black wig,' appeared and informed her that the 'doctor' (the Fleet parson) was ready to solemnise her marriage. Horribly frightened, and thinking she had got into a madhouse, the lady protested that she knew nothing about any marriage. But the doctor swore he would have his fee, and would register the marriage whether it took place or not. The lady only escaped by promising she would return the next night, and by leaving behind her a valuable ring as a pledge. In the year 1753 an Act of Parliament was introduced making it a felony to celebrate a marriage elsewhere than within a church or chapel, and the Fleet marriages were thus brought to an end. At the beginning of last century Government purchased the register books of the Fleet marriages, and they may still be seen at the Bishop of London's Registry, in Godliman Street, Doctors' Commons.

CHAPTER XVI

WESTMINSTER: ITS ABBEY AND ITS PALACE

1. **The Manor.**—The little stream of **Tyburn** discharged by two mouths into the Thames, and between the two mouths lay the swampy island of **Thorney**. It was in prehistoric times little more than a marshy stretch of mud-flats, covered, probably, as its name implies, with straggling thorn-bushes, and submerged twice a day by the tide. That Thorney—in which the wild-duck nested, and through the creeks of which the British hunter pushed his coracle, fishing—is the Westminster of to-day. But now most of Westminster stands nine feet or more above its original level, though there are even yet some parts which lie beneath the level of high tide, and would be flooded, were it not that the water is kept out by embankments.

A very ancient Saxon chronicler speaks of Thorney, or Westminster, as a *locus terribilis*—a place of awe; and from these words we may fairly conclude that very early—perhaps in the time of the Druids—the spot had some religious associations. Be that as it may, the first tradition that we know of as to a church standing on Thorney, is that Sebert, King of the East Saxons, built one there about the year 610. Such a church, built at a considerable distance from London proper, unprotected by a wall, and exposed to the attacks of the pagan Britons, and later to those of the still more ruthless Danes, must have passed a stormy existence. But about it we know nothing: we can only conjecture. The first church of St. Peter's at Westminster that we have certain knowledge of was founded by King Edgar, and enlarged and beautified by the pious Edward the Confessor. Edgar endowed the abbey-church with a large estate, which stretched, roughly speaking, from London Wall to Kensington, reaching Temple Bar on the east, and including Hyde Park on the west. This was the Manor of Westminster, that is to say the personal estate of the monks who worshipped in the Abbey and dwelt in the monastery near it. Little of these wide lands now remains the property of the Abbey, and the Manor or City of Westminster at the present day includes only the two parishes of St. Margaret and St. John, which return one member to Parliament, and, detached from them, Kensington Gardens.

2. As from the tenth century onward Westminster was a manor, controlled solely by the abbot, the lord of the manor, who sat along with a small council of officers of his own appointing, and who was responsible to none but the sovereign for what he did on his own estate, so to-day the government of Westminster remains nominally unchanged. But it is a government in name only, for the London County Council is the real controlling power over Westminster, as over the rest of London. The lord of the manor is the dean of the Abbey, who lives in the manor-house of his estate, the deanery, as his predecessors did before him. Like, them, too, he has still his high steward, an officer who originally collected the rents, and a high bailiff, who once had the power of life and death over the villeins or bonded peasants who

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cultivated the farm-lands for their masters, the monks. These two officers, along with sixteen burgesses, constitute the nominal governing body of Westminster, but for all practical purposes the manor is part of that Greater London which is controlled by the London County Council.

You will have noticed before that Westminster has been called a **City**. That title is one that is often given to it, and dates from a time when Westminster was a city in fact. When Henry VIII. was suppressing the monasteries, he broke up and disendowed Westminster, which was then in the possession of monks of the Benedictine order, and in 1540 formally declared Westminster to be a city by erecting it into a bishopric. It remained a city for ten years, since which time the title has clung to it, though Henry's appointment was the first and last Bishop of Westminster.

3. **The Abbey.**—The first Westminster Abbey, then, was built by Edgar and Edward the Confessor, and in this church William the Conqueror was crowned King of England, just after he had issued his famous charter to the citizens of London. From William onwards every English sovereign has been crowned in the same place, though not in the same church. Parts of Edward's church—some buildings inhabited by the monks on the south side—stand to this day, but Westminster Abbey, as we know it now, we owe to **Henry III.**, who practically rebuilt the whole structure. The new Abbey was consecrated in 1269, and Henry's great son, Edward I., carried on the work still further. During the reign of Richard of Bordeaux the nave was finished; but the reign of nearly every sovereign after him saw some addition or improvement made to the Abbey, and it was not till the year 1735 that the work was at last brought to a close.

In Westminster Abbey the Kings and Queens of England are crowned, and they sit on the famous stone of **Scone**, which was once the coronation stone of the Scottish Kings, and which Edward I., the Hammer of the Scots, brought away with him as a token of his absolute supremacy over that nation. And here, too, in this 'acre sown with royal seed,' many of the English sovereigns lie buried. Thirteen Kings of England rest there, five queens in their own right, and the queen-wives of many of the kings beside. The body of Henry III. reposes in the ancient coffin of Edward the Confessor, in the chapel which bears the name of the pious king, and there, too, is the plain, strong tomb of Edward I. (it was opened in the year 1774, and the body of the King was discovered almost entire) and of his grandson, Edward III., 'one of the greatest princes,' says Sir Roger de Coverley, 'that ever sate on the English throne.'

4. But volumes have been, and volumes could be, written on the kings that have been buried in Westminster Abbey, over the heads of whom their descendants have walked to take the crown. You must go and see them for yourselves, and with them the tombs and monuments of other great men who are even greater than kings. For Westminster, like St. Paul's, is the nation's burying-place. In the south transept—that is to say in the southern arm of the cross, in which shape all cathedrals and great churches are built—is the **Poets' Corner.** Chaucer was the first poet to be buried here: he was clerk of the works in the Abbey, and occupied a house in the Abbey grounds. In the same transept lie Spenser, Dryden, Dr. Johnson, Dickens, Browning, and Lord Tennyson, and elsewhere in the Abbey are the tombs of the dramatists Beaumont and rare Ben Jonson, of Addison, whose Sir

Roger de Coverley loved so well to muse among the tombs, and of Thomas Campbell, whose songs of 'The Battle of the Baltic' and 'Ye Mariners of England' glow with that patriotism which has made and maintained our country mistress of the seas. The Abbey contains the bodies of Handel, and of Henry Purcell, perhaps the most celebrated of native-born English musicians; of Sir Isaac Newton, the mathematician, of Robert Stephenson, the famous engineer, and of Charles Darwin, the greatest and the most painstaking of English naturalists; of statesmen, such as the Pitts and the Cannings; and of that lion-hearted Scotsman, David Livingstone, the greatest explorer of this or of any other age, who gave up his life in the continent he had done more than any one else to make known.

5. **The Palace.**—Side by side with the Abbey grew up the Palace of Westminster. Tradition has it that King Canute dwelt here, and that it was here, among the swampy tidal creeks that gave on the Thames, he administered the celebrated rebuke to his fulsome courtiers. But the first King who history tells us lived in Westminster Palace was Edward the Confessor, and from his time the Palace became the principal seat of the sovereigns of England down to Queen Elizabeth. The peace-loving Edward no doubt chose it for his house (despite the lowness of the situation), partly because it was next his beloved Abbey, between it and the foreshore of the Thames, and partly because it was safely out of the way of the turbulent citizens of London. In the year 1512, at the beginning of Henry the Eighth's reign, a very large part of the building was burnt down, and the King, who may also have had some qualms of conscience at living near the great Abbey which he had robbed and broken up, removed

his palace first to Bridewell, near Fleet Street, and then to Whitehall. We must not think of the palace as one whole—as a dwelling-house connected in all its parts: it has been fitly described as 'a village of single apartments.' The names of many of these live in English history—the Painted Chamber, where the House of Lords sat, the Star Chamber, St. Stephen's Chapel, and Westminster Hall—the Great Hall of the Royal Palace.

6. As Westminster was the chief residence of the sovereign, it became also the headquarters of the **Courts of Law.** The King was nominally the chief judge in the kingdom, and either dispensed justice in person, or delegated his powers to such law officers as he might appoint. These courts were held in **Westminster Hall.** They were settled there as early as the year 1224, and they continued to sit in the same place, or in chambers abutting on the Hall, for more than six hundred years, when they were removed in 1874-1882 to the new Law Courts at the end of the Strand. The new Law Courts are also partly in Westminster and partly in London, so that Westminster, which contains the Coronation Church, the Houses of Parliament, and the Law Courts, may in a sense be considered the capital of England.

The Hall as we see it to-day—it is now incorporated in the new Houses of Parliament—was built by Richard II. towards the end of his reign, and is indissolubly connected with the greatest events in the history of our country. Here Sir William Wallace was tried and condemned, and here the good Sir Thomas More was doomed to the scaffold. Strafford was tried here in the presence of his royal master, who afterwards met with the same fate. In Westminster Hall, with the walls hung with banners taken from the royalists at

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THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

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Naseby and Worcester fights, Oliver Cromwell, bible in hand and sword by his side, was inaugurated as Lord Protector. Four years later his head was set on a pole outside the Hall, with the head of his son-in-law, Ireton, on one side, and the head of Bradshaw, King Charles's chief judge, on the other. The seven bishops received their acquittal in Westminster Hall during the reign of James II., and here for seven tedious years dragged on the trial of Warren Hastings, who saved for us our Indian empire, and beggared himself in defending his action. The coronation dinners of our sovereigns used to be held in the Hall—the last one, that of George IV.—when the King's hereditary champion, Dymoke, rode up the Hall in full armour, and threw down his gage of battle to any one who dared dispute the King's title.

7. **The Parliament.**—But, more than for all else, Westminster has an interest for us, and for all the world, as the home of Parliament for nearly six hundred years. All our early Parliaments were held here, and it is a curious fact that the first Parliament which met in this Hall, after Richard II. had rebuilt it, met for the purpose of dethroning him and setting up Henry Bolingbroke in his stead. This Parliament assembled in the Hall for a special purpose, but the regular meeting-places were **St. Stephen's Chapel**[1] for the House of Commons, and the **Painted Chamber** for the House of Lords. The two houses sat there till the year 1834, when the Palace was again attacked by fire—this time to a much more serious extent. The whole of the building was then destroyed, except Westminster Hall, and the crypt and cloisters of St. Stephen's Chapel, all of which were worked into the present Houses of Parliament. The first stone of

[1] The House of Commons is still sometimes known as St. Stephen's.

the new Palace at Westminster, which exactly covers the site of the old one, was laid in 1840, the year in which Queen Victoria was married, and the House of Commons met for the first time in their new chamber on October 4, 1852. The House of Peers had been occupied since 1847. 'The present palace of Parliament thus stands,' says an historian of London, 'on a site consecrated by nearly six centuries of representative institutions.'

(i) The manor of Westminster at one time contained all the royal palaces of London—Whitehall, Kensington, St. James's, Buckingham Palace, and some other houses which were made occasional use of by different sovereigns. Whitehall was called in a proclamation by Henry VIII., 'our palace at Westminster,' and the inhabitants of London were strictly forbidden to take 'hare, partridge, pheasant, and heron, preserved in and about his honor att his palace of Westminster'; nor were they to hunt or hawk in the wilds of Islington and Hampstead Heath.

(ii) Though the sovereign was in earlier times nominally the supreme judge in the kingdom, the large number and various nature of legal cases of course prevented him from taking part in all. The last King that ever sat as a judge in Westminster Hall was James I.

(iii) Peter the Great of Russia visited this country in 1698. When he was being shown round Westminster Hall, he inquired who those people were in wigs and black gowns. He was told they were lawyers. 'Lawyers!' he exclaimed in astonishment; 'why, I have but *two* in my whole dominions, and I believe I shall hang one of them the moment I get home.'

(iv) Some of the street-names round about Westminster Abbey are worth our notice. **Broad Sanctuary** belonged to the abbot and monks of Westminster, and was a precinct wherein accused persons and debtors were safe from arrest. **Orchard Street** marks the site of one of the monastery gardens. **Old Palace Yard**, in front of the Houses of Parliament, tells its own story. **Tothill Street**, which passes the Royal Aquarium, derives its name from the Tothill, a slight eminence in the marshes, over which ran Watling Street to Westminster Ferry. **Millbank Street**, a quarter of a mile south of the Abbey, is a reminiscence of a corn-mill, which belonged to the Palace, on one of the arms of the Tyburn.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PALACES AND PARKS

1. The royal houses in London—and by London we no longer mean that small part once enclosed by walls—are but few at the present time. Crosby Hall was pulled down in 1907; the site of the Savoy is covered by a theatre; Bridewell, once a palace and then a prison, exists no longer; while Westminster, as we have seen, is still a palace, but the palace of the Parliament of Britain, and not of a King. At the present time London has only three palaces—**Kensington Palace, Buckingham Palace,** and **St. James's**—all of them, except the last, of comparatively modern origin.

2. **St. James's** stands on the north side of the Mall, the road which Charles II. had prepared as a private ground for his favourite game. After the burning of Whitehall Palace in 1698, St. James's was the only official London palace[1] of our sovereigns that existed up to the time when Buckingham Palace was occupied by Queen Victoria. Hence it has become the official Court of Great Britain, and it is to the Court of St. James's that the ambassadors of foreign nations are accredited. Here, too, and at Buckingham Palace, the Sovereign, or some member of the royal house, receives his sub-

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[1] Kensington became a palace under William III., but it was rather a quiet country-house for the sovereign than a royal residence.

jects at Court levees, Drawing-rooms, and other functions. Originally an almshouse or hospital for leprous women, Henry VIII. wrested St. James's from the monks at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and had it altered or rebuilt as a place of occasional residence for himself, when he happened to come to London. Very little now remains of the old buildings, except that on the chimney-piece in one of the chambers are still to be seen the initials of Henry VIII. and Anne Boleyn, one of his unfortunate queens. Charles I. took leave of his children here before going to his execution, and here he passed his last night on earth, walking next morning through the Park to the scaffold at Whitehall.

George IV. was born at St. James's; and in 1814 the stout old German marshal, Blücher, who helped to win the battle of Waterloo, was lodged in the palace, where he would sit at the drawing-room windows, smoking, and bowing to the people below. **Marlborough House**, once the residence of the great Duke, the ablest general that ever led the armies of England, and now the house of the Prince of Wales, stands at one side of the palace of St. James.

3. **St. James's Park**, which lies between the palace and Westminster, we owe to the pleasure-loving monarch, Charles II. Before his time it was little more than an open grass field, with several small ponds dotted about here and there. Charles had the ponds thrown into one sheet of water, pretty much as we see it to-day, built a decoy for ducks (the descendants of some of which may be there to this time), and converted the narrow, winding footpaths into broad gravel walks. After the Restoration the Park became a very fashionable resort. Charles II. was constantly to be seen there feeding the ducks and playing with his dogs, and all the world—the world of leisure and fashion—came to look at him. Pepys tells us how, in the winter of 1662, 'it being

a great frost,' he saw people 'sliding with their skates, a very pretty art.' The Duke of York, the King's brother, was one of the foremost in the game, and, to Pepys's distress, would insist on going and skating near places where the ice was broken, or thin and dangerous. The park is shaped very much like a boy's kite, the artificial water representing the backbone. At the head of the kite, the eastern end, stand some of the great Government offices, such as the Horse Guards, the India Office, and the Foreign Office; and near them is **Downing Street**, a narrow and rather dingy street, where is the official residence of the First Lord of the Treasury. It is in this official residence that Cabinet meetings are held.

(i) 'This is a strange country,' said His Majesty, George I., who had just arrived from Hanover. 'The first morning after my arrival at St. James's, I looked out of the window, and saw a Park with walls, canal, etc., which they told me were mine. The next day, Lord Chetwynd, the ranger of *my* Park, sent me a fine brace of carp out of *my* canal; and I was told I must give five guineas to Lord Chetwynd's servant for bringing me *my own* carp out of *my own* canal in *my own* Park.'—WALPOLE'S *Reminiscences.*

(ii) On the southern side of the Park runs a road called **Birdcage Walk.** It derives its name from an aviary that was established there by James I.

4. At the end of Birdcage Walk stands **Buckingham Palace**, the windows of which also command a view of St. James's Park. It is one of the largest palaces in Europe, and at the same time probably one of the ugliest. The palace was built on the site of Buckingham House by George IV., but he never lived in it. When Queen Victoria came to the throne, some alterations were made to the old palace, and the Queen entered on her new residence on the 13th of July 1837. Throughout her reign she always lived at Buckingham Palace, whenever she happened to be in London. Though

the palace is an ugly and meaningless structure, the gardens behind it (which are not open to the public) are very beautiful; but, lying as they do along the ancient course of the Tyburn, they are nearly always damp and foggy. At the lower end of the gardens stand the royal mews; these are the stables of the state horses, especially of the famous cream-coloured ponies, which draw the Sovereign's carriage on all occasions of high ceremony.

5. The west end of London, though it needs them least, is bountifully supplied with parks. For on the other side of Constitution Hill, which borders Buckingham Palace Gardens on the north, is the **Green Park**, across which the winding hollow of the brook Tyburn can still be traced, and that again is practically only a continuation of the greatest of the 'lungs of London,' **Hyde Park.** The four parks—St. James's, Green Park, Hyde Park, and Kensington Gardens—thus form a continuous stretch of open ground from Whitehall to what was once the little hamlet of Kensington.

Hyde Park is the second largest of the London parks, and it is a curious fact that it is almost the exact size (400 acres) and the exact shape of the old walled City of London. It is a noble stretch of turf and majestic trees, relieved here and there by beds of bright-coloured flowers. 'Hyde Park, every one knows, is the promenade of London.' These words were written during the reign of Charles II., but they are quite as true to-day as they were then. In the Ring, a circular road that runs round the Park, may be seen at certain seasons and certain hours of the day all the wealth and fashion of the country; the Ring itself is crowded with perfectly appointed carriages, and the shady walks under the

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HYDE PARK
(Rotten Row)

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trees are thronged with well-dressed men and women. A broad lake, commonly known as the **Serpentine River**, runs through the middle of the Park. This fine sheet of water was made in 1733 by Queen Caroline, George the Second's wife, who caused a number of evil-smelling ponds that lay along the old course of the Westbourne to be drained and made into the Serpentine.

(i) The Westbourne continued to supply it for a hundred years more, till the water became so contaminated with sewage that the Westbourne was led into an underground drain, and the Serpentine was supplied with pure water by one of the water-companies. The 'river' is now a great resort of bathers in the early morning, and as many as twelve thousand people have been known to bathe there on one Sunday morning. In the afternoons and fine summer evenings hundreds of children may be seen sailing their miniature boats, while pretty pleasure skiffs, propelled by oars, ply upon its shining surface.

(ii) At the north-eastern corner of Hyde Park stands the **Marble Arch**, built in imitation of a Roman triumphal arch. This was once placed in front of Buckingham Palace, but was removed to its present site in 1851.

6. **Kensington Gardens** is the western sister of Hyde Park, and was once, like St. James's Park, the pleasure grounds attached to a palace—the Palace of Kensington. More than any other of the London parks it is laid out in broad, regular walks, with rows of noble elms on each side. A hundred years ago the state of the Gardens was very different. Most of the well-kept walks did not exist, and the ground beneath the trees was covered with a thick growth of brushwood. For we read how, in the year 1798, a pension of £18 a year was granted to one 'Sarah Gray, widow, in consideration of the loss of her husband, who was accidentally shot while the keepers were hunting foxes in Kensington Gardens.' You would be as likely to see a tiger as a fox in Kensington Gardens now; but of wild birds there are still a number

which nest among the branches of the smoke-begrimed elms —the ring-dove, the rook, and the crow, titmice more rarely, and the active, busy starling. On the western edge of the Gardens stands the third of the London palaces, **Kensington Palace**, a pleasant, rambling house of red brick. It became a royal residence during the reign of William of Orange, who bought Nottingham House, as it was then called, from the Earl of that name. Kensington was in that day, and for fifty or sixty years longer, a quiet village cut off from London by infamously bad roads, often infested by footpads and highway robbers. Lord Hervey, writing in 1736, describes the main road as 'a great impassable gulf of mud.' William of Orange and Mary, his wife, Queen Anne, and King George II., all died in Kensington Palace; and here, on the 24th of May 1819, Queen Victoria was born. It was in this palace, too, that the Queen held her first council in the year 1837. In the year 1899 the palace was formally made over as a gift to the nation by Queen Victoria.

Kensington Gardens was once an old manor, the manor of **Neyte**. The name survives in **Knightsbridge Road**, a name which commemorates the bridge (Neytesbridge) carried over the western road.

7. Of the other great parks of London it is not necessary to say much. **Regent's Park**, the largest of them all, lies in the north-west, and derives its name from the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., after whom Regent Street is also named. The most important, and certainly the most interesting, part of the park is the **Zoological Gardens**, in which is gathered together probably the finest collection of wild animals in the world. Round the northern side of Regent's Park runs the Regent's Canal, which is now little used. In 1876 a gunpowder explosion, which shook all

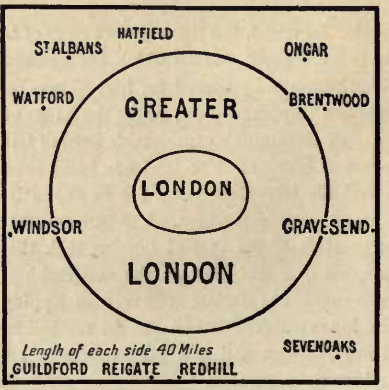
London, occurred on a barge that was passing through the canal. The shock was terrific: scores of houses in the immediate neighbourhood of the explosion were completely wrecked, and even at a greater distance, street after street had hardly a single pane of glass left whole in the windows. **Primrose Hill**, just north of the park, is the only one of the little hills of north London that is not covered with houses. North again of Primrose Hill is **Hampstead Heath**, another of London's pleasure-grounds; and 'Happy Hampstead' is the holiday-resort of thousands and thousands of young men and women. **Victoria Park** is the lung of the north-east of London, and breathes fresh air and health into the toiling population of Spitalfields, Hackney, and Bethnal Green. On the south side of the river **Battersea Park** was laid out in the year 1858, on what was a few years before a squalid stretch of low-lying marshy ground.

(i) It is going rather far afield, but there are two more of London's pleasure-grounds we ought to know about,—lands which the generous public spirit of one of her governing bodies has procured for her. These are **Epping Forest** and **Burnham Beeches.** Epping Forest, where the Kings of England hunted of old, and which still maintains a considerable herd of fallow-deer, lies sixteen miles north-east of London. The land was being gradually encroached on for building, and the trees were being cut down, until the forest was in danger of being swept away altogether. The Government refused to interfere, and the Corporation of the City of London took the matter in hand. The Corporation spent over £500,000 on the undertaking, and in the year 1882 the Queen was enabled to declare 5000 acres of Epping Forest free and open to the public for ever. The Forest can be reached from London by a few minutes' railway journey, and is a glorious resort alike for the mere holiday-maker and for the naturalist.

(ii) **Burnham Beeches** are in Bucks, a little further away than Epping. Like it, they once formed part of that mighty band of forest that once encircled London on the north—the fastness from which the wilder Britons came down to attack their civilised kinsmen that dwelt in the City of Augusta. Three hundred and seventy-four acres of this wild woodland were purchased by the London Corporation in 1879, and they were set apart for public use in the same year as Epping Forest.

(iii) 'The enormous extent of the ecclesiastical estates in the suburbs, and their seizure by the crown (in the reign of Henry VIII.), have proved circumstances of the happiest kind for us of the time of Queen Victoria. It is to them we owe the parks. All these 'lungs of London' were at one time or another church or abbey land. In those parts of London where the church lands remained to the church, no parks were made.'—LOFTIE'S *History of London.*

(iv) In addition to those parks already mentioned, London has other smaller, but yet important breathing spaces, in Finsbury Park, Southwark Park, West Ham Park, and Greenwich Park, and in the ornamental gardens which fringe the Thames embankment. Recently, too, the County Council have added to the open spaces of London by purchasing Marble Hill, Twickenham (66 acres), Eltham Park and Avery Hill, Eltham (125 acres), Hainault Forest (803 acres), and Springfield, Clapton (32 acres).


HATFIELD
ST ALBANS
ONGAR
WATFORD
GREATER
BRENTWOOD
LONDON
WINDSOR
GRAVESEND
LONDON
Length of each side 40 Miles
SEVENOAKS
GUILDFORD
REIGATE
REDHILL

GREATER LONDON

CHAPTER XVIII

GREATER LONDON: ITS EXTENT AND GOVERNMENT

1. The words 'Greater London' set before our minds an idea that is almost appalling in its immensity. How are we to deal with a city of cities that contains more people than all Canada, though Canada is itself larger than Europe? What can be said about a vast wilderness of brick and mortar, in which every hour of the day and night a house rises out of the ground, in which twelve children are being born every hour, and to which a town as large as Brighton is added every year without the addition being noticed? Put against it the six largest cities of the United Kingdom—Glasgow, Manchester with Salford, Liverpool, Birmingham, Sheffield, and Leeds—and London would outnumber the total inhabitants of these places by two to one. Take out of London as many people as there are in Paris and New York, which are the two next largest cities in the world, and London would still be left at the top.

2. And to add to our difficulties, here is a city, or an aggregate of cities, which has no name, because it has no limits. Apart from the City of London proper, that small hive of industry which is set on the north bank of the Thames and round which the neighbouring swarms of suburbs have clustered, it is really impossible to say what London is —where it begins or where it ends. The inhabitants of this

mass of houses may call themselves Londoners; but, were they asked, say, by a Manchester man, where they lived, they would not answer 'London,' but 'Dulwich,' or 'Stratford,' or 'Woolwich,' as the case might be. London City then exists, and has defined boundaries, but London has none. It is impossible to put your finger down on the map, and say, 'Here London begins,' or 'Here London ends.'

But it will be asked how, if there is no such town as London, is one to talk about it or learn about it? It is impossible to say anything of that Greater London, which is spreading, with the extension of the railway systems, every day, and every hour, and every minute, over Middlesex, Kent, Surrey, Essex, and even into Hertfordshire; but luckily there is an area,—vast enough, but still defined—the extent of which has been regularly mapped out, and which we can readily grasp with our minds. This is the **County of London**, which was constituted by Act of Parliament in the year 1888. It takes in all suburban London, properly so called, but London is always pushing out beyond these limits. The boundaries of this county, which is made up of fragments of four others, are: on the north, Highgate and Hampstead; on the south, Tooting, Streatham, and Eltham; and it stretches from Hammersmith and Mortlake on the west to Plumstead on the east. The area of the whole is 121 square miles — it is therefore the second smallest English county[1]—and the population is over five million souls. This, then, is the County of London. But it must be borne clearly in mind that, though this area includes the City of London—the London, that is, with which the history in this book is chiefly concerned—yet that is a distinct city by itself, in so far that it is controlled in most respects by a separate governing body. Secondly, it must be remembered that the term 'Greater London' includes not only the County, but also all the outposts of houses that are steadily creeping out in all directions — north, south, east, and west, but especially to the west, for most great cities grow in that direction. Greater London, so far as is at present known, contains more than six millions of people.

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[1] The Soke of Peterborough, in Northamptonshire, is the smallest of all.

3. **The City of London**, the heart of this immense body, is yearly growing smaller and smaller. By night it is a small town, and has a sleeping population of hardly more than 26,000 souls; by day it swells to a great city of over a million people. This swarm of business-men and workers flows into it every morning, and in the evening they go back to their homes in the suburbs. To describe, however briefly, these suburbs would be impossible in such a book as this, or in a dozen like it. Indeed it would be difficult to say what are the suburbs of London. In the beginning of the Queen's reign Belgravia to the south-west, and Tyburnia to the north of Hyde Park, were suburbs, in the proper sense of the word —the border-land between the town and the country. No one would call them so now. Greenwich is no longer a suburb, as a continuous mass of houses unites it with Lambeth. Bow, Stratford, Bromley, Brixton,[1] and Kilburn, were all outlying villages when the Queen was a girl: now they are as much an integral part of London as is Charing Cross or Regent's Circus. About the same time, too, Islington was a hamlet with a single street, and was celebrated for its cheese-cakes, custards, and cow-keepers. 'A man,' said Dr. Johnson, 'who gives the natural history of a cow is not

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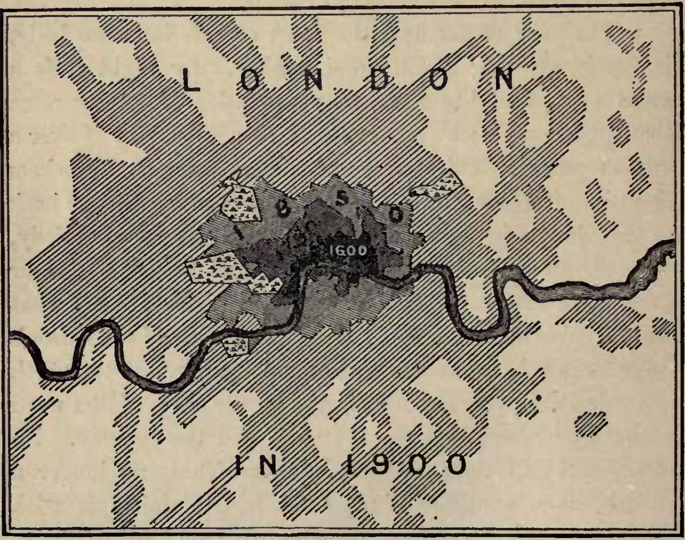
[1] Brixton = Briggestane—the stone at the bridge (which probably crossed the Effra).

to tell how many cows are milked at Islington.' Half-way through the nineteenth century much of the land, that is now covered thick with houses, was laid out in pleasant gardens or pasture-land. At Islington that prince of humorous essayists, Charles Lamb, had a house, in the garden of which grapes were growing in the open air. On the site of **Gower Street,** now a dull street of heavy, respectable houses, both grapes and nectarines grew in the beginning of last century. Thirty years ago one might walk through green fields to Ealing on the west, or to Highgate on the north, or to Sydenham on the south-east; but now the resistless tide of houses has crept up to, and over, all these. Where then are the suburbs of London? No one can say, because no one can tell where they end.



4. **The Population of London.**—When James I. came to the throne, London was said to contain little more than 150,000 inhabitants, about as many people as are now taken into custody by the London police every year. At the Restoration of Charles II., one John Graunt, a Fellow of the Royal Society, calculated that there were about 120,000 families within the city walls. 'The trade and very City of London,' he says, 'removes westward, and the walled city is but one-fifth of the whole pile.' But this must have been a most exaggerated estimate, and another calculation, much nearer the mark, puts the total population in 1687 at about 700,000. If this figure be correct, London's people could have increased but little through the eighteenth century, for, in the year 1801, when the first regular census was taken, the population stood at 864,845. In 1841, the birth-year of the Prince of Wales, the census gave London 1,870,727. Now came the era of railways, and the country-people seemed to be attracted towards the great city, as iron is to a magnet. When the 1881 census was taken, London—Greater London—contained over four and three-quarter million people, and at the present time the tale stands at over six millions—or about six times as many people as there were in England and Wales at the time of the Conquest.

'The population of the City has steadily, indeed rapidly, declined for many years. For five hundred people who were in London at the accession of Queen Anne there are not fifty now. Yet though the City is deserted, its centrifugal force is like that of some great planet. The units that fly off continue attached as rings round the body of their parent world. The suburbs of London exceed the original city in size and population many hundred times.'—LOFTIE, *Historic Towns.*

5. **The Government of London.**—We have now to inquire

how this great cluster of towns and villages, which we call by the name of London, is controlled, what the government—the controlling force—is, and what are its duties and its powers. For it will be quite plain to you that this vast area could never have stretched out, as it has done, in all directions, and could never have been a safe place to dwell in, were it not for some power or body that ordered the destinies of the growing town. Now we have already seen how the City of London proper was governed, and how its form of government from early times took very nearly the same shape that it bears at present. There were, and are, the Lord Mayor, as King, the Aldermen, who are his House of Lords, and the Common Council, which corresponds to the House of Commons. The Common Council is elected by the freemen of the city, who must be householders; the Aldermen are chosen by the wards, the ancient divisions of the city, that once were the personal estates of certain powerful families; and the Lord Mayor is appointed by the liverymen, the members of the City Companies.

6. That is the constitution of the city government only, and does not extend to the Greater London, which has grown up outside the city walls. But it may well be asked why it was that, as London began to grow, this central city government was not applied, as a matter of course, to the ever-widening area? Why could not the city have gone on making parts of the outer London into fresh wards, similar to those which already existed within the walls? The answer is simple: the thing could not be done. Some parts of London, like Southwark, which the city bought from Edward VI., and the ward of Farringdon Without (the wall), which was the property of a city magnate of the same name,

became part of the city, and enjoyed the same government. But by far the greater bulk of the land on which London was built was 'manor-land,' that is, it was the private property of the king, or of some great nobleman, or, in a larger number of cases, it belonged to the Church. And, being manor-land, it was therefore subject to the sole jurisdiction of the lord of the manor, who resented any interference with his rights on the part of the city. Westminster, for instance, remains a manor, in name, to this day, and is supposed to be controlled by a lord (who is the Dean of Westminster Abbey), and by his officers, the high steward and the high bailiff. The city government could not therefore be extended over the outside districts because the control of these lay in the hands of persons, or bodies of persons, who refused to surrender it.

7. Till very recently then there was no regularly appointed central government to watch over the affairs of London without the wall. But in the year 1888 there was such a central government established, and it is called the **London County Council**. The extent and boundaries of the county of London, over which this council exercises its powers, you have already learnt. The council is made up of a chairman, nineteen aldermen, and one hundred and eighteen councillors, thus corresponding very nearly to the corporation that governs the city. The councillors are elected directly by the ratepayers, and the aldermen by the councillors. All sorts of men sit in the council—peers and commoners, clergymen and lawyers, millionaires and ordinary working-men; and this happy mixture has made it perhaps the most representative of any governing body in the world. The first meeting of the council was held on the 21st of March

1889, and the first chairman was Lord Rosebery, who six years later was Prime Minister of England.

8. The powers of this body are as vast as the city over which its authority extends. It looks after the eighty-two miles of main sewers that drain the metropolis (to say nothing of the hundreds of miles of connecting drains): it has added one thousand acres to the park-lands of London; the crossings of the Thames, by bridge, tunnel, and ferry, are its care; it can pull down or build up any street; it lays a heavy hand on all buildings unfit for human habitation, and insists that every house shall have a constant supply of water; the London fire-brigade is in its hands, and the council sees, through its inspectors, that every building where a large number of workpeople is employed, is provided with proper fire-escapes. More than this, the council attends to cattle diseases (a very needful task in a city that is fed entirely from the outside), protects the lives of infants, keeps an eye upon lunatic asylums and reformatories, does what the old guilds used to do in the matter of regulating weights and measures, suppresses all kinds of nuisance, and regulates overhead wires and sky signs. In fine the council interests itself in the thousand-and-one—the million-and-one—things that go to make the life of the greatest City in the world. The council spends annually about £10,000,000, and part of this money is raised by a rate of 3s., or a little less, in the pound. That is to say, if a man has a house, the rent of which is £20 a year, he would have to pay a rate of sixty shillings. This, then, is the government of London; and London, under the control of the County Council, is probably the best governed city in the world.

(i) A curious contrast can be drawn between the government of the City of London and the government of London county. Both are on the same broad lines—Lord Mayor and Chairman, Aldermen in both, and Councillors in both. But the County Council is as essentially democratic—elected by the people for the people, as the City Corporation is essentially an oligarchy, a government that is elected by the few. And yet the City government was at first as democratic as it was possible to be, at the time when all the men of London, who were all members of Companies, met in public meeting to elect their Lord Mayor. The Companies still elect the Lord Mayor, but the liverymen, as the members are called, now number only 8765. The Companies, moreover, no longer represent the different crafts and trades from which they take their name, and so it has come about that the first magistrate of England's first city is elected by a body of men that numbers little more than a thousandth part of the total population. A million of men come in and out the City daily, and eight thousand men say who shall be the chief magistrate to control the affairs of the million.

(ii) The City of London has so far a share in the government by the council, in that representative members from the city have seats in it.

(iii) The Metropolitan Board of Works was established in the year 1855. Before that time each parish outside of the city had its own local system of administration.

9. **Borough Councils.**—In the year 1899 London received a further measure of self-government by being divided (with the exception of the City), into twenty-eight boroughs, each of which is governed by a mayor, aldermen, and council. The premier borough is the ancient City of Westminster; fifteen of the larger parishes have been erected into boroughs, whilst the others consist each of several smaller parishes thrown into one. The boroughs took over the duties of the old vestries, and their principal work is concerned with the lighting, cleaning, and paving of streets; with the supervision of drains apart from main sewers; with the inspection of dairies, slaughter-houses, and of food which they may condemn if unsound; and with the provision of working-class

dwellings. In these respects each borough is self-governing and independent of the London County Council. The boroughs raise the rate not merely for themselves, but also for the London County Council and for the Boards of Guardians. These latter bodies fix the amount of money they require for their own purposes, and then issue a 'precept' to the Borough Councils, who are obliged to raise the rate demanded, in addition to what they may require for the local borough needs.

10. **London's Water.**—The London water-area, that is the various aggregated districts which used to be supplied by the great water companies, is about 620 square miles in extent. It was long felt that the supply of water, one of the prime necessities of life, to this huge area should not be left to private enterprise, and in the year 1902 the Metropolitan Water Board was brought into existence by Act of Parliament for the purpose of acquiring the undertakings of the various private water companies, and of supplying water to the districts formerly served by these companies. The companies were bought out, payment being made partly in cash and part in three per cent. stock, and the supply of water to London and its outlying districts is at last in public hands. Sixty-six nominated members sit on the Board, of whom two represent the City, fourteen the London County Council, and the rest the various county, borough, and urban councils that administer the different sections of the London water-area.

CHAPTER XIX

THE COMPANIES AND INDUSTRIES OF LONDON

1. The **Guilds** of London were first established to afford mutual aid to the members of the same craft or trade. Out of the guilds sprang the **Companies**, which first began to take regular shape in the reign of King Edward III. The function of the Companies was twofold: they controlled municipal politics, and secondly, they arranged every detail and managed every department of the particular trade they represented. The first of these powers they possess still, in part; for it is by the **liverymen**, the members of the Companies, that the Lord Mayor of the City of London continues to be elected. But their supremacy over the different trades, which in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was absolute and undisputed, is nearly all gone. Yet something more than a shadow of their former authority is still left to four of the Companies—the Fishmongers, the Goldsmiths, the Stationers, and the Apothecaries. **Billingsgate**, the great fish-market of London, is superintended by the first company; to **Goldsmiths' Hall**, behind the General Post-office, gold and silver articles of all kinds are brought, so that their purity may be tested; if you register a book or a newspaper at **Stationers' Hall**, near Ludgate Hill, it becomes a punishable offence to copy or steal from it; and

the **Apothecaries** issue licenses to competent persons to dispense drugs. And lastly, the Gunmakers, who are of course a modern company, test and guarantee the strength of any gun-barrels that may be brought to them. These powers, few in number and limited in extent, are nearly all of what is left of the widespread control that the Companies once exercised on the commercial and industrial life of London.

2. What this supremacy amounted to, you can see for yourselves from the following rules of the Glovers' Company (quoted by Sir Walter Besant):—

(1) None but a freeman of the City shall make or sell gloves.
(2) No glover shall be admitted to the freedom of the City unless with the assent of the Wardens of the trade.
(3) No one shall sell his goods by candle-light.
(4) Any false work found shall be taken before the Mayor and Aldermen by the Wardens.
(5) Journeymen shall be paid at their present rate of wages.
(6) Persons who entice away journeymen glovers to make gloves in their own houses shall be brought before the Mayor and Aldermen.

Such were some of the regulations of the Glovers' Company, and the other Companies had codes of rules on nearly the same lines. From them you can see that every question that affected the glove-trade was controlled by a set of strictly devised rules, the penalty for the breaking of which was expulsion from the city. At first sight it might seem as if these regulations were a good thing for the glove-trade in general, in that they assured to the workmen protection, teaching in their craft, and a steady rate of wages; while the public, on their side, were sure of getting good stuff for their money. But against this you must put the fact that the makers of these rules were not the craftsmen themselves, but the masters. The Companies, in fact, soon came to be what we now call trades-unions—not, however, of the workmen against the masters, but trades-unions of the employers of labour against the employees. The Wardens of the Companies held the workman in the hollow of their hand: he had to work for what wages they chose inside the city, and he could not go outside the walls to follow his calling, for in that case he would have no market wherein to sell his wares. The result was that, while the condition of the workmen was little benefited, the Companies continued to grow richer and richer, until they became what they are now—the richest corporations in the world.

3. At the present day the London Companies are seventy-eight in number, and of them the twelve greatest enjoy incomes which range from £11,000 to £111,000 a year. But on the other hand, while fifteen Companies have a yearly income of more than £10,000, there is more than one of them which has an annual income of only £20 or less. Many of the trades which still have companies no longer exist—at all events as separate trades. Such are the **Fletchers**, or arrow-makers; the **Bowyers**, or bowmakers; the **Loriners**, whom we should now call saddlers; the **Broderers**, or embroiderers; and the **Horners** and **Upholders**, who dealt in horn and upholstery. The business of the Companies, in these modern days when one does not need to be a freeman to practise a trade or set up a shop in London, is now chiefly ceremonial. In their

magnificent halls, among which are some of the most interesting houses in the city, splendid dinners and entertainments are given either by the liverymen to themselves, or to some great man, the passing hero of the hour, whom the city delights so to honour.

One hears a great deal about the luxury and extravagance of the City Companies: one does not hear so much of the good work they do, for much of that is done very quietly, and does not come before the public eye. But it is very good work all the same. They have large sums of money in trust, with which they keep up many charitable institutions in different parts of London; they contribute too most generously out of their private funds to various benevolent objects—to the Indian Famine Fund of 1897, for example; many great schools are managed and supported by the Companies, and nearly all of them show great interest in promoting technical instruction in their special trade or manufacture. In this last most useful respect they do exactly what the old Companies used to do: they teach the workman how he may best pursue his craft, by putting before him the best models and schooling him in the best methods. In doing this they are helping to keep Great Britain in her proud position of being the first manufacturing nation in the world.

(i) There are in the City twelve **'Great' Companies.** The names of them are the Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Merchant Taylors, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners, and Clothworkers. The richest of these is the **Mercers,** which has a yearly income of £111,000. Whittington, Sir Thomas Gresham, and Queen Elizabeth were all Mercers at different times, and the list of the members of the Merchant Taylors contains the name of almost every English king, and a proportionate sprinkling of dukes and other noblemen.

(ii) It is interesting to notice how many English surnames are derived from the names of trades. The names of the Companies show us this: Draper, Goldsmith, Skinner, Salter, Baker, Barber, Bowyer, Brewer, Butcher, Carpenter, Dyer, Fletcher, Loriner (which is our Lorimer), Painter, and Turner—all these are common English names.

(iii) One of the Glovers' regulations was that no man could make gloves or sell gloves unless he was a freeman of London. This explains the meaning of the honour which we now frequently hear of as conferred by the Council of a town (not necessarily London) on any distinguished man—the freedom of the city. Nowadays it means little or nothing, though in some towns there are a few nominal duties still attaching to the distinction. In Stirling, for instance, a newly made burgess (a man, that is, presented with the freedom of the city) has to mount guard on the battlements for two hours on a certain day in each year. But in the days when the Companies were a real power, the freedom of the city, or the freedom of a Company, when conferred on a man, meant that he had leave to set up a shop or practise a certain trade within the city limits. General Lord Kitchener, for example, was presented with the freedom of the Grocers' Company in 1902, after the South African War, but it is not likely that he will ever open a shop within the precincts of the city wall.

(iv) The greatest of the Companies' Schools is **Merchant Taylors.** This great school of 500 boys was founded in the year 1561, and is still governed by the Master, Warden, and Company of the Merchant Taylors. It now stands at the upper end of Aldersgate Street on the ground that was once occupied by Charterhouse School.

4. **London Industries.**—The Company was to the London workman of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries what a benevolent despot might be to an ignorant people. For the craftsman of London was, in those ages, says Besant, 'incredibly ignorant; he knew nothing except his own craft; . . . he could not read, he could not inquire, because he knew not what question to ask or what information he wanted.' Here the Company stepped in, and firmly and wisely looked after the workman in every way. If through innocent misfortune he came on poverty, he was helped; on

his death, the Company kept a watchful eye on his widow and children, and the sons were bred to the trade their father had followed before them. Within the City limits the Companies organised and directed every trade and every branch of commerce. They were the better able to do this, for, as you will remember from the names of many of the streets, special trades generally stuck in the same places; and so an effective control could be kept over all of them. Nowadays the Haberdashers' Company, supposing it possessed the power, would find it a difficult task to look after the thousands of drapers' shops that are scattered all over the metropolis. But as London grew, and suburbs began to spring up without the walls, craftsmen, who were not freemen of London, settled in them, and over these men the Companies were powerless, for the City had no jurisdiction outside her own walls. Gradually, too, these outside craftsmen began to dispose of their wares by peddling them round the outlying villages, and so grew to be independent of the City markets, over which the Companies maintained a firm hold. Whether the industries of London would have been as great and as numerous if the Companies had continued to exercise a rigid control over them, we need not inquire: we have only to learn something about the industries of London as they exist to-day.

5. London is not a manufacturing town. It is a great deal more: it is a cluster of manufacturing towns. Looked at from this point of view, you can think of London as of a human body. There is the City in the centre, the heart, which does the silent and life-giving work for the whole—the buying, the selling, and the organising; and then there are the towns without the wall, the limbs, which perform the

visible and active share of the labour. But the City, indeed, is the industrial heart of the whole kingdom, for a very large part of the business of the great manufacturing towns in the provinces is there transacted. Outside the City the actual business of manufacture is carried on. To give even a brief account of the manufactures of London would be impossible here. How could one in a book like this say anything adequate of the industries of six million people? But some there are which are specially identified with certain districts of London, and others which are interesting for the sake of their historical associations. **Brewing**, for instance, is a very ancient London industry, and London stout and London ale are famed all the world over. The antiquarian Stow tells us that in his day there were 26 breweries in London, all 'near to the friendly water of the Thames.' In our day there are about 150 large breweries, which have to sink wells many hundreds of feet deep; their beer would not be very popular did they depend on the 'friendly Thames.' One of the largest of these is that of Barclay, Perkins, and Co., whose brewery on the Southwark bank of the river covers the site of the Globe, the summer theatre of Shakespeare and his fellows. With brewing goes **distilling**, for which, and for **sugar-refining**, London is also famous.

6. These three industries, brewing, distilling, and sugar-refining, are carried on in various parts all over London; but there are many which seem to have settled themselves permanently in certain districts. One of the most interesting of these is the **silk manufacture** of Spitalfields and Bethnal Green. This was brought to England by persecuted French Protestants, who fled to this country about the year 1685, and whose names—Labouchere, Romilly, Bouverie, and

Ligonier—are now well-known or distinguished English surnames. **Bermondsey** and **Southwark** have been noted for **tanning** for hundreds of years, and they are still the home of tanners, soap-boilers, and candle-makers—trades which make the smells of that district unmatchable by those of any other town. And yet it was to Bermondsey and Rotherhithe that invalids used to be sent for the purity of the air.

In the year 1870 the Pope wished to procure a silk vestment woven all in one piece. All Italy and France were searched to find a man who could do this; and he was discovered at last in Spitalfields, a direct descendant of one of the Huguenot refugees whom Popish persecution had forced to quit their country two hundred years before.

7. Most of the London manufactures are carried on in the neighbourhood of the Thames. At **Lambeth** and **Millwall** there are large **engineering works**, and Lambeth, too, has a great name for its **potteries**, the factories of Messrs. Doulton turning out some of the most artistic pottery in the world, in addition to the plainer and more useful kinds. **North Woolwich** makes **candles**, and in the Woolwich on the other side of the river is established the **Royal Arsenal**, that turns out the eighty and hundred-ton guns for our navy. Boots and shoes and ready-made clothing are manufactured in different parts of the industrial area of London, and lucifer match-making, a trade that is in general most miserably paid, gives employment to a large number of women and children in the East End. Away from the river, **Clerkenwell** (where once was the clerk's or priest's well of clean, pure water) is the headquarters of the **watch** and **clock making** manufacture, and is also occupied by a large number of **printing-houses.** The books that are printed there and elsewhere are collected and sold in **Paternoster Row.** The Row was, till a few years

ago, almost the exclusive home of the bookselling and publishing trade, but now many publishers have premises in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden and even further west. The **newspapers**, both the London dailies and the provincial journals, have their offices in **Fleet Street**; but the **Times,** the greatest of them all, is issued from **Printing-House Square**, Blackfriars, where the first *London Gazette* was printed in the time of Charles II.

(i) Of London's miscellaneous manufactures the list is very large. The cabinet-makers' shops lie principally in the neighbourhood of **Shoreditch,** though there are a great many near Tottenham Court Road, where the shops of the great upholsterers are. Lambeth, which is perhaps the greatest of London's manufacturing towns, has extensive hat factories.

(ii) **Long Acre**, a street just north of Covent Garden, is the ancient seat of an industry, which is still carried on there—carriage-building. John Dryden, the poet, lived in this street.

(iii) Though the Thames is the river of the greatest seaport in the world, yet comparatively little **shipbuilding** goes on there. It is chiefly carried on in the **Isle of Dogs.** This peninsula, which is an island now only in name, was in the year 1830 a low marshy tract of land, with hardly a house on it. Now it is not only covered around its edges by houses and warehouses, and by great docks in the middle, but supports several large shipbuilding yards and chemical works.

(iv) The trade in **second-hand clothing** is chiefly in the hands of the Jews of **Houndsditch.** This name commemorates the course of an offensive ditch that once ran just outside the city wall. 'Old Clo'-men' have lived and dealt in this street ever since the Reformation. Sunday morning is the great day of sale.

(v) On the same day, too, there are large bird and fancy animal fairs at Church Street, Bethnal Green, and at Seven Dials, an oval of mean squalid houses, a stone's-throw from Shaftesbury Avenue, which is one of the newest and finest streets in London.

CHAPTER XX

THE MONEY-MARKET OF THE CITY—THE EXCHANGES

1. The immense business importance of the City is due to two main causes: first, to the great ring of suburbs that has grown up round it and that transacts its business in it; and, in the second place, to its nearness to the Port of London. Great Britain is the world's chief carrier: London is the world's chief port: hence it plainly follows that the City of London, in which all, or nearly all, of the business of the Port is arranged, must be the business centre of the world.

The City then is the place where the cargoes of ships entering and leaving the Thames are bought and sold, where those who hire English ships for transporting merchandise pay the cost of the freight, and where companies are started to develop the produce of different parts of the world. Money is constantly flowing into or out of the City, which has become, in consequence, the money-market of the world. If an adventurous band of gold-prospectors in South Africa, or in the Yukon district of Canada, light upon a mine or gold-deposit, which they themselves have not means enough to develop, they come to London and 'float' a company. That is, they induce a number of people to take shares to aid them in carrying through their enterprise; and the shareholders, of course, get the advantage of any profits that may be made out of the venture. If a foreign government wants a loan of money, it comes to London; and the financiers of the City hold many of the countries of Europe, and nearly all of

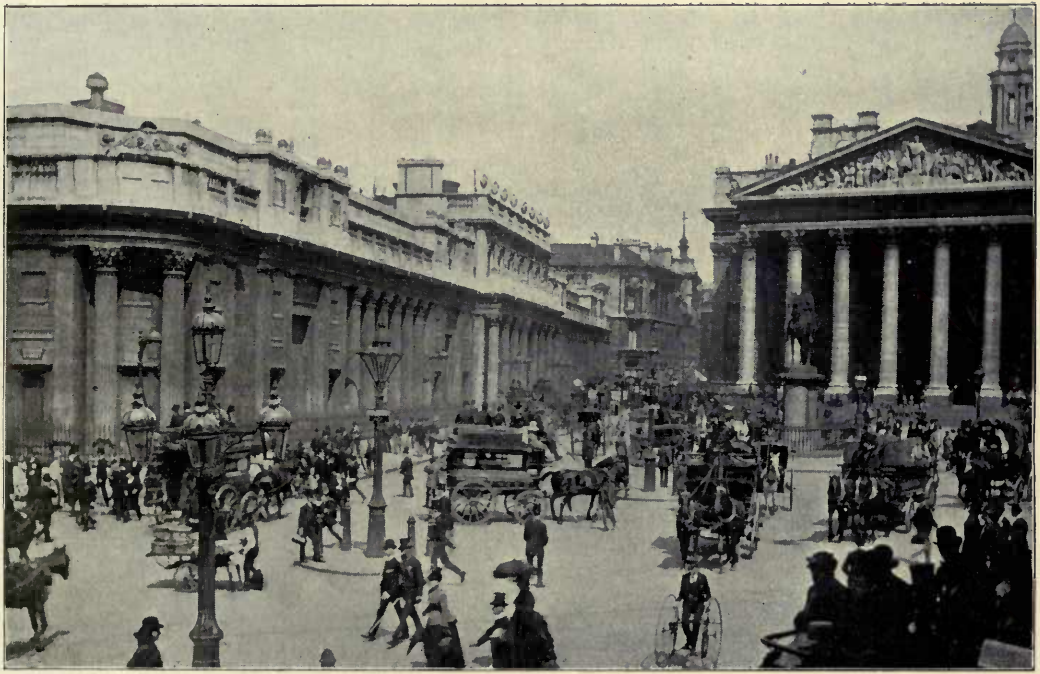
South America, in their debt. All our colonies owe their railways and harbours to money borrowed in London, and many of the great railways in the United States have been built by English capital. Any large scheme for promoting gas, water, shipping, tramway, and telegraph companies is taken to London, where, if the security be considered good enough, the money necessary for the undertaking will be advanced.

2. At the present time the value of the 'stock' (that is, the money sunk in taking shares in companies) dealt with in the money-market of the City reaches the enormous figure of over £6,000,000,000. This is the amount of stock that is quoted in the 'stock list' or official register; and there are, in addition, a vast number of other companies, whose shares are bought and sold, but which have not sufficient individual importance to entitle them to a place on the list.

In London, then, beats the money-pulse of the world, and the throbs of that pulse are most strongly felt in one place, the London **Stock Exchange**. This building stands in Capel Court, on the south side of Throgmorton Street, and faces the eastern front of the **Bank of England**. The members of the Stock Exchange had no existence as a corporate body till the beginning of the nineteenth century, when, in the year 1801, the present building was begun. At its first opening, the 'house,' as it is called, had upon its rolls 551 members and 99 clerks. To-day the roll of members includes more than 3000 names, as well as those of an army of clerks that have the right of admission. No stranger is allowed within the precincts of the Stock Exchange, and, should one be impudent enough or unlucky enough to find his way in there, the immediate crushing of his hat over his nose will be a sufficient hint for him to quit.

3. Quite near the Stock Exchange lies the **Royal Exchange**, which occupies a commanding position at the meeting of the principal City thoroughfares. This is one of the central meeting-places for merchants, and here (the busiest hour being between three and four in the afternoon) are conducted the transfers of merchandise and all operations which have to do with commerce, in contrast to the Stock Exchange, which is exclusively a money-market. The Royal Exchange is the third building of the kind on the same site. The first was, as you will remember, built by Sir Thomas Gresham, but that was nearly all destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. There is not, it is true, quite the same necessity for an Exchange in these days of rapid communication by land and sea, as there was in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Then reliable news about the state of trade and markets, and information as to what goods were likely to be most saleable in different parts of the world, was hard to come by, and it was of the very greatest benefit to London merchants that they should have a place to meet in, and exchange views with visitors from Amsterdam, Antwerp, Hamburg, Venice, and Vienna. But now the telegraph tells the merchant all that he wants to know within a few minutes. Yet, though the Royal Exchange has thus lost some part of its usefulness, it still deserves the title that was given to it in the seventeenth century—the **Eye of London**.

4. The last great wheel in the money and business machinery of the City is the **Banks**. You all of you probably know what a bank is, but you may not all recognise what an important part banks play in every department of trade and industry. A bank receives money for safe-keeping; but that is only a small part of its usefulness to the com-



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munity. That money, which is entrusted to its charge, it lends out again to the manufacturer, so that he may purchase and work up raw material; to the trader, that he may go into the markets with the products of the manufacturer; and to the merchant, to help him in his ventures to distant countries. The function of banks is to prevent money lying idle: they are in fact the veins by which the streams of money course through the commercial system. The great London street for banks is **Lombard Street.** Of course there are many banks elsewhere, both in and outside the City; but from the time when Edward I. first gave leave to the Lombards—certain merchants of Florence—to settle there, Lombard Street has always been the headquarters of the banking business. Much of the trade and exchange-transactions of London remained for a long time in the hands of these foreign merchants, but a prejudice gradually grew up against them as being foreigners, and their place was taken by the goldsmiths, who both lent out money at interest and received it for safe-keeping.

5. At No. 68 Lombard Street, where Martin's bank is now, Sir Thomas Gresham had his place of business, distinguished by the sign of the grasshopper; and the next house, which is now in the occupation of Messrs. Glyn and Co. (bankers), still belongs to the Goldsmiths' Company, to whom it was left by Sir Martin Bowes, an eminent goldsmith in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Though Lombard Street was the old headquarters, and still is the chief stronghold of the bankers, there are many streets near it containing banking establishments that represent nearly all the countries of the civilised world. There is **Threadneedle Street,** that passes the Bank of England, which is often called in joke

the 'Old Lady in Threadneedle Street,' and **Throgmorton Street**, which gets its name from Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador in France; and there is **Cornhill**, where keen City financiers fill the place of the stolid merchant-farmers that once dealt in the corn-market there. The tide of money-making and money-dealing thus sets most strongly around the **Bank of England**, which alone among banks lends itself to no speculative business of any kind, but is the protector and guarantee of the stability of them all.

(i) 'It is in the open central area of the Royal Exchange that the commercial transactions take place, the ground-floor being occupied by shops and offices, and the principal floor by insurance companies and "Lloyd's rooms."'

(ii) Some of the chief exchanges for special articles are the **Corn Exchange** in Mark Lane (*i.e.* Mart or Market Lane); the **Wool Exchange** in Coleman Street; the **Coal Exchange** in Lower Thames Street, nearly opposite Billingsgate; and an auction mart for landed property in **Tokenhouse Yard.** There is also an open Stock Exchange in Lothbury, a street on the north side of the Bank of England. The latest-born London Exchange is the **Shipping Exchange** in Billiter Street, which was opened by the Lord Mayor in 1893.

(iii) The greatest financiers in the City of London are the Jews, and great Jewish houses, like the Rothschilds, control the money-markets of nearly all the world. The Jews of London were first settled by William the Conqueror in a street off Cheapside, now known as the Old Jewry. Edward I. expelled them from London in the year 1290, but they were permitted to return under Cromwell, and settled themselves in the neighbourhood of Aldgate. With the marvellous genius for finance that is innate in the race, they have made themselves the richest people in London. And yet the Jewish population of London presents a most curious contrast. They are at the same time the richest and the poorest inhabitants of the metropolis. The Jewish financiers of the City are the richest; but there is probably no lower depth of life than that reached by the 'sweated' Jewish tailors of Whitechapel and the districts near it.

(iv) The business of actual money-making—the manufacturing of coins—is carried on at the **Royal Mint** on Tower Hill. There, on the site of an old Cistercian Abbey of St. Mary's, all the gold and silver coin, and some of the copper or bronze, that circulates in Great Britain, is manufactured.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FOOD AND DRINK OF LONDON[1]

1. When the Romans finally abandoned Britain, and after the Saxon invaders had landed on its shores, the doom of London, or Augusta, was certain. It must have been starved out. The river-mouth was blocked by pirates; the Jutes held the cornfields and pastures of Kent, whence London drew most of her food; and nothing could come down-river owing to the presence of the West Saxons in the western counties. For these facts, or, if you like, fancies, there is no historical warrant, but the geographical position of London must convince us of their truth. The city had no 'home-farm' within her borders: she derived nearly all her supplies from without. Cut off these supplies then—and we know that they must have been cut off—and the fall of London by starvation was inevitable.

And what happened then may happen again—nay, if we were once to lose the command of the seas, it almost certainly *would* happen. For London now gets all her food from outside—much from the surrounding country, but far more from over-sea. Each year sees the few remaining market-gardens and fields on the outskirts of the town swallowed up by the advancing tide of bricks and mortar, and each year, therefore, pushes the food-producing districts further and further away from the metropolis.

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[1] For most of the facts and figures in this chapter the writer desires to express his indebtedness to W. J. Gordon's interesting book on *How London Lives*.

2. But, when we come to look at the question of London's food-supply, what an appallingly vast one it seems to be! 'Taking all London's food together,' says the writer of *How London Lives*, 'the fish, the meat, the poultry, the provisions, the vegetables, the fruit, the groceries, and the bread, we get an annual consumption of close on a million and a half tons a year. Add to this the drink—excluding the water—and, dividing by 365, we have a daily consumption of 5800 tons. Clear Trafalgar Square of its fountains and its monuments, pack it with one day's supply of the great city's food, as solid and straight as the cabbages are packed on a market-gardener's wagon, and you will have a mass higher than Nelson's Column.' And all this huge mass of food-stuff has to be brought into London from elsewhere. Think of what work this means in the importation, carriage, and distribution of the goods by ship, railway, and cart; and think also what the failure of the supply would mean—horrible distress for a third of the population, and starvation for the rest. This was the bitter experience that Paris had to endure in the years 1870-1, when during the German siege tough horse-flesh was worth its weight in gold, and a rat cost as much as a turkey. The peril of such an experience can only be averted from London, as long—and no longer—as the British navy remains a match for the associated fleets of any two countries in the world.

3. In addition to the vastness of the subject itself, another difficulty besets us in considering the food-supply of London.

There are no figures or accounts kept of the meat, provisions, bread, and the thousand other things that come in to feed the people of the greatest city in the world. In some cases —in the city markets, for instance—we have definite figures to guide us, but on the whole we can only go by estimate. Fortunately, however, for a very large part of our meat-supply, there is something reliable to go upon. For nearly half of that comes from abroad, and comes in the shape of living animals to the Corporation's foreign cattle-market at **Deptford**, where accurate accounts are kept. From that place about 130,000 tons of meat are sent out every year—sent out as *meat*, for though all the animals come living to Deptford, none living ever leave it. A steamer with a cargo of three hundred cattle from the western prairies of North America comes up the Thames, and moors at the cattle wharf: the gangway is lowered, the ship cleared in a quarter of an hour, and in a few hours more the great sides of beef are ready to be despatched to the central meat-market at **Smithfield**. The other London market for living cattle is at **Islington**, whither come by rail Canadian cattle that have been landed at Liverpool, and the oxen, sheep, pigs, and calves bred in our own country. As many as 10,000 cattle and 38,000 sheep have been on sale at Islington Market in one day.

4. Although a very large quantity of meat is sent to the London butchers direct from the country (a quantity which therefore cannot be ascertained), the bulk of the wholesale meat trade is done at **Smithfield**, where the old live cattle-market used to be. It is estimated that Smithfield alone sells every year about 300,000 tons of meat, or, to put it in another way, 1000 tons a day, not counting Sundays. Side

by side with the meat-market at Smithfield, there is another smaller one for poultry and provisions. All the world pours its stores into this market. There you may see crates of chickens from the Crimea, and boxes of geese that have marched over the Landes of Southern France to be shipped at Bordeaux; there are rabbits from New South Wales, hares and wild-fowl from Finland, ducks from Normandy, and scores of other good things. Altogether, counting the sales of Smithfield, of Leadenhall, which sells a little meat, and of the Jews' market at Whitechapel, it is reckoned that London devours 380,000 tons of meat a year, which amounts to about one-third of a pound for the daily food of each of its six millions of people.

We have mentioned **Leadenhall**: that is the chief poultry and game market of the metropolis. It was once the principal provision-market in the City, and the Spanish ambassador in the days of Charles II. told the king that there was more meat sold there than in the whole country of Spain. Now it is given over principally to game and poultry —grouse from Yorkshire and Scotland, quails from Algeria, wild-fowl from the fens, pheasants and partridges from Norfolk and Suffolk, hares and rabbits, turkeys, ducks and chickens, mostly from Sussex and Surrey. Of chickens alone the sale is about 2,000,000 a year. At Leadenhall, too, you may buy almost any sort of pet—from a rabbit to a ferret, a hare or a tortoise, foxes and parrots, goldfish and hedgehogs.

5. Then London must have butter for its bread—and of that it spreads about 30,000 tons a year—and milk to put in its tea, of which it drinks a small lake of 125,000 gallons every day, furnished by close on 90,000 cows. Of cheese, half of which comes from Canada, and the rest from the

United States and Holland, London eats in a year 13,000 tons—a mass as big as an ironclad line-of-battle ship. What are the amounts of ham, bacon, pork, tinned and salted meats that come into London from abroad we cannot tell; but the number of foreign eggs alone a parliamentary return for 1903 gives as 2,381,867,000. Allowing London, which contains a seventh of the total population of the British Isles, a seventh of the whole number, her share will be nearly 340,000,000 a year—that is, London eats or uses ten eggs every second.

(i) In the year 1533 there were only eighty butchers in London and the suburbs, who each killed nine oxen weekly. This would give a yearly total (for in the six weeks of Lent no meat at all was eaten) of about 33,000 beasts —say, 16,000 tons of meat.

(ii) 'On Mondays and Thursdays, at Islington Market, about seven o'clock in the morning, there is such a scene of life and movement as is worth going miles to see. From the roof of the ring of offices that cluster round the central tower, the eye ranges on one side over rows upon rows of orderly cattle, each firmly secured to the rail that marks the gangway, and on the other are pen after pen of sheep huddled within the gates. The sea of ovines and bovines seems to be limitless. It is a heaving, restless, noisy sea, with the booing and bleating in irregular bursts, now in one grand diapason, now in a distant solo, but always continuous. Dogs bark and men shout, as down the crowded gangways, between the long lines of writhing horns, there hurry the twos and threes and dozens and half-dozens chosen by the purchasers, many to journey off to the private slaughter-houses, the rest to meet their fate in the public abattoirs close by.'—GORDON.

6. **Billingsgate** is London's chief fish-market. Others there are—the handsome but useless **Columbia Market** in Bethnal Green, the **South London Fish-market** in the New Kent Road, and another in **Shadwell**—but Billingsgate overshadows them all. Billingsgate, along with Queenhithe, used to be the port of London, but in the first year of Elizabeth's reign it was opened as a market for fish and

general produce. The original fish-marts were, as the names imply, in Fish Street (where the Great Fire started) and in Friday Street,[1] Cheapside; but these places were deserted in favour of a site nearer the river, by which, before the era of railways, all fish was carried into London. The present building was erected on the Thames bank near the Custom-house in 1874, and it is there that the bulk of the wholesale fish trade is carried on. Stated baldly, Billingsgate handles every year 160,000 tons of fish of all sorts. Or, to put it another way, there pass annually in and out of the fish-market 1,800,000,000 head of fish, counting every single cockle, periwinkle, and whelk, as a separate fish; but even this monstrous total means that Londoners eat less than one fish each a day. Formerly most of the fish that reached Billingsgate used to come to it by water. Now only a third comes that way, and the rest is carried in by railways from the various fishing centres.

(i) Here is a description of the different sorts of fish that are to be seen at Billingsgate :—'Gigantic salmon, fresh caught from the firths and bays of Scotland, or from the productive Irish seas, flounder about, as the boxes in which they have travelled disgorge them upon the board; quantities of delicate red mullet, that have been hurried up by the Great Western all the way from Cornwall, for the purpose of being furnished fresh to the fastidious palates of the West End; smelts brought by the Dutch boats, their delicate skins varying in hue like an opal as you pass; pyramids of lobsters, a moving mass of spiteful claws and restless feelers, savage at their late abduction from some Norwegian fiord; great heaps of pinky shrimps; turbots, that lately fattened on the Dogger Bank, with their white bellies bent as for some tremendous leap; and humbler plaice and dabs, from our own craft—all this bountiful accumulation forms a mingled scene of strange forms and weird colours, that no one with an eye for the picturesque can contemplate without interest.'

(ii) It has been reckoned that, to give the people of London a periwinkle apiece, you would require to build a pile of bushel-baskets as high as St. Paul's.

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[1] Owing to the fact that Catholics eat fish every Friday.

(iii) London both receives a vast quantity of fish, and also sends out again vast quantities even to seaside towns. It is not an uncommon experience at a sea-coast hotel, to be told that you cannot have fish for breakfast, because the London train has not come in!

7. It is most largely on foreign countries that London has to depend for her meat-supply, but in the matter of **fruit** and **vegetables** the case is a little different. Here our own country is to some extent self-sufficing, and London's fruit and vegetables come from every part of the kingdom. But Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and Holland take a big share of the trade for themselves. It is in **Covent Garden**—the old convent garden of the monks of Westminster—that the biggest traffic in fruit and vegetables is carried on. To that place in the very early morning roll drays without end, blocking up all the surrounding streets, and strings of country wagons laden with baskets of fruit. Many too are piled with huge towers of cabbages and cauliflowers, which are most ingeniously built up without any cords to hold them. There are other fruit and vegetable markets held at Columbia Market, at Smithfield, in the Borough, and in Spitalfields, and London's largest potato-market is at the Great Northern Railway Station at King's Cross; but the sales at these five places taken together do not equal a third of that of Covent Garden. How much vegetable food London eats we can never know for certain. 'The Garden' is said to dispose of 720,000 tons of different vegetables in a year, and this would give each man, woman, and child in London twelve ounces of green food every day.

8. Then there is the fruit, home and foreign. The trade in the latter kind chiefly centres in the square round the

Monument. There oranges, lemons, and apples are dealt with by the million. In 1890, for instance, the two Spanish ports of Valencia and Denia alone sent London seven hundred million oranges, and two years later, when the influenza was raging, this stupendous quantity grew to eight hundred and twenty-two millions. And besides the fresh fruit, we must remember all that reaches us in cans, the quantity of which can never be estimated. Of raisins and currants alone there were landed in London in the year 1896 about 40,000 tons, but then a great part of this would be distributed about the kingdom.

Nor are we in a better position towards estimating the London consumption of those necessaries, though not necessities, of life—tea, coffee, sugar—though there are said to be 150,000 tons of the last used in London every year. The mention of sugar brings us to beer, for brewers use it very largely in their manufactures, and of beer it is estimated that London drinks annually 125,000,000 gallons. Add to this 4,700,000 gallons of spirits and 1,800,000 gallons of wine, and against it put the fact that the metropolitan water companies pour into London every year 60,000,000,000 gallons of water; and we get to the astonishing result that London is supplied with only five hundred times more water than alcoholic liquors.

9. We have left the **bread-supply**—the most important of all—to the last. And here again a few simple figures will show you how dependent London is on outside sources for this—the chief necessity of life—and what the cutting off of the bread-supply would mean. Out of every three loaves that Londoners eat, two are made from foreign flour Secondly, there is at no time stored up within the United Kingdom

more flour or bread-stuffs than would last for more than six weeks. Consequently this country, and London with it, is never more than six weeks off a famine; and, were we to lose the command of the sea for that time, about four million people in London alone would be face to face with the horrors of starvation. As for the amount of bread eaten in London, the mention of the mere gigantic figure would tell you little. But you may gain some idea of the amount, when you are told that the two-pound loaves that are eaten every day would, if placed in a row, stretch from London to Leeds.

(i) Edward III., in the year 1328, granted to the city the sole right to establish markets within a seven miles radius of London Stone. Right up to the time of Edward VI. there was scarcely a shop between Westminster and St. Paul's, and the City Corporation controlled all markets. The great markets of London, like Smithfield, Billingsgate, and Leadenhall, are still under the direction of the Corporation.

(ii) There are a few other markets in London which we have not mentioned. **Bermondsey Market** sells hides and leather; and hay is bought and sold at **Cumberland Market,** Regent's Park, and at **Smithfield** Hay-market. The hay-market, which is now held in Regent's Park, was once carried on in a street still called the **Haymarket,** near Charing Cross, in the centre of the theatre-world of London.

CHAPTER XXII

THE PORT OF LONDON

History. — The Port of London extends nominally from London Bridge to the North Foreland, and actually from London Bridge to Tilbury Docks. It is the first port in Great Britain, the first port in Europe, the first port in the world. This unrivalled position it owes, in the first place, to its geographical advantages. London lies along both banks of the Thames, which is a broad navigable river, running far into the land, and with a strong tide to drive vessels up it twice a day; it stands opposite to the great markets and ports of the continent of Europe; and lastly, though this is not nearly so important in modern times, it used to be the centre of an extensive food-producing area, so that it could both easily feed itself and send food to other countries that wanted it.

When the Romans held this country, a Latin historian tells us that London was famed for its 'concourse of merchants.' He does not tell us what they came to buy, but we know that England's chief products at that time were corn, tin, oysters, and red-haired slaves which met a ready sale in the markets of France and Rome; and such must have been the freights that the Gaulish merchants took back with them to the Continent. When the Romans left this country, trade left too, and Augusta lay for long deserted and silent. But after the coming of the East Saxons commerce revived. The little port of **Dowgate**, on the Wallbrook, was full of the shallops of Gaulish traders, but soon that was found too small for the press of business, and **Billingsgate** and **Queenhithe** became the ports of London. Once more the city was 'the mart of many nations resorting to it both by sea and land,' and the rude wharves were piled with a medley of gloves and bales of wool from Flanders, iron-work from Liége, French wine, and pepper and spices from the East, as well as with the produce of the country itself—eggs, butter, cheese, lard, fowls, and swine. Early Saxon documents, which are preserved to this day, tell us that Lundentune's hythe (London's landing-place) was then *the* port in all England. As early as the eighth century certain German merchants were in the habit of resorting to London, and met with honourable entertainment there and much profit. By the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries these men, whom the English called **Easterlings** but who called themselves **Hanse**, had regularly settled on the Thames bank as a corporate body. They had their own 'Gildhall,' the hall of the gild or brotherhood, not far from the site of Cannon Street railway station; they were allowed to erect their own warehouses, and by degrees they got, owing to privileges granted them by successive sovereigns, nearly the whole of the foreign trade of London into their hands. The last vestige of their house, which was called the **Steelyard**, was removed to make room for the railway station in 1863, and 'steam-engines now run shrieking day and night over the spot on which the foreign commerce of England centred for a dozen generations.' These Hanse merchants monopolised all the trade of the Flemish ports and consequently all the trade with the nearer countries of Europe. From these ports ships owned by English-born merchants were entirely excluded, and they were forced to sail to the distants ports of Bordeaux and Lisbon. Then came the Italian money-changers, the Lombards, and they left even less trade in the hands of English adventurers. To further embarrass the trade of London, these men were allowed the privilege of farming the customs-dues of the port. That is, they paid the king so much a year, and were permitted to collect the dues on the cargoes of all ships that moored off Queenhithe and Billingsgate. In the year 1329 the Bardi of Florence paid King Edward III. the sum of £20 a day for the privilege of farming the customs, not of London alone, but of the whole of England.

This tying of the hands of the Londoners could not last for long: London trade was not to remain a perpetual preserve for a few German merchants. But the end of their monopoly did not come till the end of the sixteenth century, and thus the earlier history of the Port of London is a history, not of English enterprise, but of German. Before this time, however, Edward IV., who himself had made many ventures in cargoes of wool to Flanders, had greatly encouraged and assisted the foreign trade of London.

A still greater stimulus was given to it on the accession of Elizabeth. Sir Thomas Gresham's Exchange was started in 1571; Antwerp was sacked by the Spaniards in 1576, while London took its place as the leading port of Europe; and, more than all, the age of maritime discovery had begun. The power of the Hanse monopoly had been waning since 1505, when the English company of **Merchant Adventurers** sprang into existence, and soon it was to die altogether.

Bit by bit the privileges of the Germans fell from them: a tax was imposed on all their exports and imports, they were forbidden to export wool, and finally, in 1598, their house of the Steelyard was taken away, along with nearly every one of their former privileges. The Merchant Adventurers filled their place, and took over, in particular, their wool trade with Flanders. Even in the year 1566 London is said to have sent to Antwerp and Bruges wool and drapery to the value of £2,000,000. Wool was London's greatest export then, just as it is her greatest import now. But it was not only the Merchant Adventurers who made their headquarters in London. Elizabeth's wise commercial policy, and the spirit of maritime research which flourished under it, gave rise to many other trading companies. The **Russian Company**, founded in 1555, brought to London the furs of North Russia, and silks and teas from the East by way of Persia. The **Levant Company** promoted a trade in the Mediterranean for dried fruits, dye-stuffs and carpets—a trade of which London enjoys a very large share still. The last years of Elizabeth's reign saw the birth of the **East India Company**, which had its offices in the East India House in Leadenhall Street, and Charles II. laid the foundations of our empire in West Africa and Canada by granting charters to the **African Company**, which died at the beginning of this present century, and to the **Hudson Bay Company**, which still sends its furs to London and has made London one of the most important fur-markets in Europe. All these trading concerns enjoyed, like the Hanse merchants, monopolies: that is to say, no London adventurer would be suffered to trade with the East, for example, unless he were a member of the East India Company. But they all brought an increasing prosperity to the port, and the foreign quays, which were then all on the north side of the river, were crowded with merchandise—gold and 'grains' from the Guinea coast, furs from Canada, fish and timber from Norway, sugar and rum from the West Indies, and silks, spices, and cotton from the East. And yet how insignificant, compared with modern times, was the trade of London in those days. The tonnage of ships that entered and cleared from the Thames towards the end of the seventeenth century, would be surpassed by many a colonial port at present even of the second class. We have no records of the shipping that visited the Thames even in comparatively recent times, for in the year 1666 the Custom-house, where such figures were kept, was burnt down, and the records were burnt with it. But in the year 1693 we find that the shipping, which brought foreign cargoes to the Port of London, numbered some 2,000, and had a tonnage of 221,000 tons. Two hundred years after, in 1903, the tonnage of vessels that entered, and cleared from, the Thames amounted to over nineteen millions. And to-day, too, the vessels that belong to a single one of the great merchant fleets—the British India Steam Navigation Company, for instance—have a tonnage far greater than the whole tonnage of the Port of London in the year 1693.

Present Trade.—The Port of London, both in point of tonnage and in the value of its turnover, stands first in the United Kingdom, and therefore first in the world. The value of the merchandise that London handles yearly, both for export and import, is close on the enormous total of £280,000,000; or, to put it in another way, nearly a **third of the whole trade** of the United Kingdom flows in and out of the Port of London. In this huge total the imports surpass the exports in the proportion of nearly three to one. London is therefore *the* import port of the United Kingdom. The reason for this is threefold: London is a mart, it is a distributing centre, it does not lie near any very great manufacturing district. True, it manufactures for itself, but then it consumes a very large proportion of its own manufactured products. Hence we may expect to find that its trade, for import, consists chiefly of raw material, and such things as do not undergo any extensive process of manufacture.

And so it is. The ancient trade of London lay principally in the **export** of **wool**; but now London **imports** nearly all the wool that enters this country, and the wool-market of the City is attended by buyers not only from all parts of England, but from all over the world. London's ancient connection with the East India Company still keeps her to the front in the products of India, China, and the Indies, and nearly all the **tea** and **coffee** that England drinks, as well as most of the **indigo** and half the **rice**, is brought up the Thames. Though Liverpool keeps for itself a great part of the American trade, especially that in meat and breadstuffs, yet London has a practical monopoly of the **furs** that come from Canada; and the name of the West India Dock reminds us of a time when a third of all British imports came from the West Indies. London still absorbs half of the West Indian trade, which includes nearly all of our **cocoa**, and about a third of our **cane-sugar**. From North America, too, is brought to London nearly a half of our **petroleum**, a third of our **cheese** (this from Canada principally), and a quarter of the **tobacco** we smoke. For **wine**, too, London is famous now as it has been from early times, when Bordeaux was the capital of our French dominions, and half of the wine that is imported into England pays duty at the Custom-house on the Thames bank. The **French trade** with England is concentrated in London, or in its out-ports, Newhaven, Folkestone, and Dover, and this includes all the special French manufactures, like silks, kid gloves, lace, and woollen fabrics, as well as large quantities of butter, eggs, fruits, and vegetables.

Looking to the geographical position of London, one cannot be surprised that the French trade, and the Dutch trade which supplies us with butter and margarine, should flow towards it. But one must wonder that London should cut out Hull and the Tyne ports in the Baltic trade; yet this is just what it does. London monopolises the greater part of the imports from the Baltic, especially timber, corn, cattle, wool, and provisions. But we might go on for pages enumerating the different commodities that are brought to the docks and wharves of the Thames; a mere list of them would include the name of nearly every article that is known to civilised commerce. Stated shortly, what you must remember is this: London is the chief import port in the United Kingdom; it imports principally raw materials and foods; its two great imports are wool and tea.

(i) In addition to the articles mentioned before, London imports from Australasia and the Argentine Republic three-fourths of all the **fresh mutton** that reaches England. She takes three-fourths of the **leather**; half of the **hemp**, the **lead**, and the **raisins**; and nearly all the **tin**. London is likewise the chief English port for fruit, hides, jute, paper, petroleum, linseed, and timber.

(ii) For **exports** London takes the second place, Liverpool being first. Its principal exports are, in their order, **cottons** (far after Liverpool), **metal manufactures**, **apparel**, **woollens**, and **machinery**.

(iii) The following figures give the '**movement**' of the Port of London at different times, in tons entered and cleared.

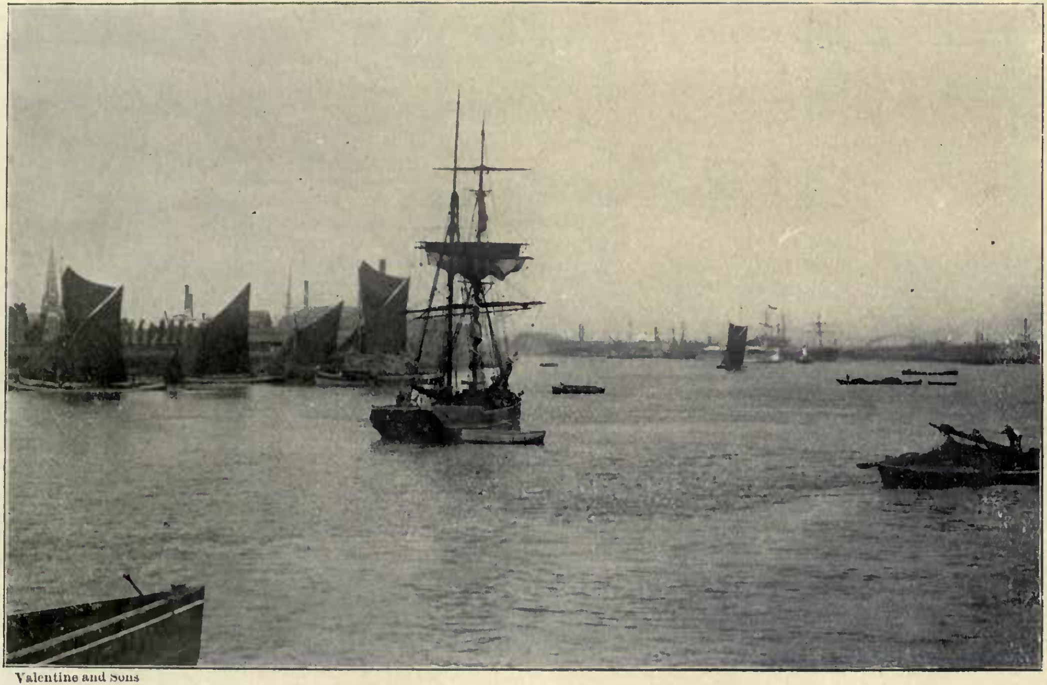
1693, . . .	221,000	1861-70, . . .	6,500,000[1]
1816, . . .	1,247,000	1888, . . .	12,941,861
1831-40, . .	2,000,000[1]	1903, . . .	19,063,629

[1] Average of decade.

The Docks.—As you have learnt before, the landing-places for cargoes that came up the Thames were Billingsgate and Queenhithe, and in very early times Dowgate. But it was not very long before these two came to be quite insufficient for coping with the ever-increasing commerce of London, and Elizabeth, our great merchant-queen, issued a proclamation that certain quays should be authorised as legal landing-places for goods. With these 'legal quays,' as they were called, London managed as best she could for two hundred and fifty years; but you can see for yourselves, from the figures, that the quay-space which served the people of the end of the seventeenth century must have been far too small for the merchants of the eighteenth. By the year 1795 accommodation was so limited that there was not storage-room enough even for the sugar that was imported through London. At that time the 'legal quays,' which all lay between Billingsgate and the Tower, had a river frontage of barely a third of a mile; there were also a few wharves on either bank of the river, called 'sufferance wharves,' where goods were permitted to be landed; and in this insignificant and crowded area the whole business of the port had to be transacted.

Every one grumbled: the Custom-house officers could not do their duty properly, ships had sometimes to wait months before unloading—six weeks was the ordinary time it took to discharge the cargo of an Indiaman—and merchants had no proper storage for their goods. The need for docks was very pressing, and they were demanded by every one concerned. But obstacles, in the shape of vested interests, stood in the way. The proprietors of the legal quays complained that they would be ruined if docks were built, and much opposition was shown by the licensed carmen who had the privilege of carting goods away from the quays. The payment of a large sum of money, however, did away with the difficulty—even the owners of certain mooring chains got compensation in return for their real or supposed loss—and the first dock in London, the **West India Dock**, was opened in the year 1802. Other docks followed in rapid succession, and the last of them, the great deep-water docks at **Tilbury,** which the largest ships in the world can enter at any state of the tide, were opened in 1886. Though the Port of London nominally extends to the North Foreland, Tilbury Docks, which lie twenty-six miles below London Bridge, are the real end of it, for there is no other London dock further down where ships can load or discharge.

Those who wish to gain some idea of the vastness of the shipping trade of London had better sail up the river by one of the Gravesend steamers. The first part of the course lies past rich grazing fields, and gradually factories of one kind and another become more frequent, till just past Woolwich a forest of masts stretches far inland to the right. These mark the site of the **Royal Victoria** and **Albert Docks**, which are the largest and most important of any on the north side of the river, and it is on that side that most of the foreign commerce goes on. From the Victoria Docks onwards stretches a nearly unbroken line of dock-walls.



Valentine and Sons

THE THAMES AT GREENWICH

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At the head of the Blackwall Reach of the Thames are the **East India Docks**, and then the river sweeps round the Isle of Dogs, once the swampy delta of the Lea, but now covered by the network of the **West India** and **Millwall Docks.** Both the West and East India Docks used to be set aside for the special products of the West and East Indies, while all wine, tobacco, and rice had to be landed at the London Docks. But this arrangement only lasted for twenty years, and was never renewed. Indeed any dock that depended solely on the West India trade of to-day would be in a very poor case. Each of the docks now receives merchandise from different countries, though many of them are the landing-places for special articles.

Continuing our passage up the river, we have on the Surrey side the parish of Rotherhithe, an unsavoury enough neighbourhood now, but in the reign of Henry IV. a favourite watering-place for Londoners. Here is a great group of docks, called the **Surrey** or **Commercial Docks.** To these docks are brought large quantities of grain, and also of timber, as the names of two of them, Canada Dock and Quebec Pond, serve to remind us. The **Grand Surrey Canal** leads through the middle of the Commercial Docks and keeps them in close touch with the heart of South London. At Shadwell, on the north side of the river again, we come to the **London Docks**, which open to the river through Wapping Basin. It was in Wapping that all pirates captured on the high seas formerly used to be hanged. Their bodies were exposed on a gibbet at the low-water mark, 'there to remain till three tides had overflowed them.' Next to the London Docks comes the last of the great docks of the Thames—**St. Katharine's.** This was built in the year 1828 on the site of an old hospital which now stands in Regent s Park, and the soil that was dug out in the making was carried off some miles higher up the river, and spread over the marshy ground of Pimlico, to form some of the most fashionable streets and squares in London. St. Katharine's Dock was thought an immense undertaking at the time of its construction, as 1250 houses had to be pulled down, and 11,300 inhabitants removed; but it is one of the least important docks at the present day, owing to the fact that it will only accommodate vessels of the comparatively small burden of 800 tons.

These docks then form the principal part of the twenty-six miles of waterway that make up the Port of London. But all along the course of the river there are many hithes or landing-places, and wharves, where ships can discharge, and vessels of very large burden are seen up-river as far as London Bridge. The **Tower Bridge**, the last eastern bridge over the Thames, is no obstacle even to the largest steamers, as by a marvellous and gigantic piece of mechanism the bridge divides in the middle, each half swings upwards towards the side-towers, the vessel passes underneath, and, the bridge lowered to its place again, the street traffic goes on as before —all within a few minutes. But the huge ocean 'liners' never come up the river as far as the Bridge; they berth in some one or other of the bigger docks lower down. Some of the greatest steamship lines in the world despatch their vessels from the Thames. To **India** and the **East** generally run the boats of the British India Steam Navigation Company (B. I.) and the Peninsular and Oriental (P. and O.). So regular is the running of the P. and O. that the mails, which this line carries to the East, are invariably ahead of contract time. To **South Africa** go the Union-Castle liners and the ships of the Natal line, and **Australasia** is served by the steamers of the Orient, the P. and O., and the New Zealand Shipping Companies. By these last lines it is that London is supplied with her principal import—wool.

(i) 'We were winding slowly through the forests of masts in the Thames up to our station on the Tower wharf. The giant bustle, the coalheavers, the bargemen, the black buildings, the ten thousand times ten thousand sounds and movements of that monstrous harbour, formed the grandest object I had ever witnessed. One man seems a drop in the ocean; you feel annihilated in the immensity of that heart of all the world.'—CARLYLE.

(ii) **London and Liverpool Compared.**—'The contrast between these two great centres, while natural in a sense, has this important difference: Liverpool exists for its docks, whereas London exists for many other purposes. Liverpool, from its situation close to the manufacturing districts, draws from them an export trade far larger than that of London, while the trade of London is in a great measure required for the supply of London itself. Hence it has an enormous coasting and local trade, of which Liverpool has comparatively little. The London docks, being situated in the bends of the Thames, do not present that imposing appearance which those of Liverpool do, stretching in an unbroken line for miles along the Mersey. They are, however, considerably larger in area; the largest dock in Liverpool, the Alexandra, is 44 acres, and the Huskisson, which comes next, 30 acres, as compared with the Tilbury Dock, 57¼ acres, the Victoria, 74, and the Albert, about 73 acres. The total water-area of the London docks is 568 acres, that of the Mersey docks 546. In 1894, London possessed 2710 steam and sailing vessels, with a tonnage of 1,588,588, as against Liverpool's 2295 ships, with a tonnage of 2,100,694. It will thus be seen that the vessels of the Mersey are larger than those of the Thames.'—CANADIAN MAGAZINE.

The Custom-house.—London is a free port—that is, nearly every kind of goods can be landed in the Thames without having to pay duty. But there are certain articles, the chief of which are **tea** and **coffee, wine** and **spirits, tobacco** and **dried fruits,** which have to pay a duty or tax before they can be sold in this country; and it is for the collection of these duties that the **Custom-house** exists. The present building, which is the fifth on the same site, stands on the Thames bank close to Billingsgate Market, which was once the busiest spot in London's port. The charging of customs dates from very early times. In the tenth century King Ethelred's witan, or parliament, imposed a custom of one halfpenny on every small boat that arrived at 'Billynggesgate,' and fourpence on every large vessel; and in the year 1329 the farming of the customs of London were given to the Bardi of Florence in return for a payment of £20 a day. In the first year of Queen Elizabeth's reign the customs of all England produced the sum of £73,846, 12s. 10d., and, in the sixteen years preceding the Restoration of Charles II., they averaged £316,000. To-day the customs-duties of the United Kingdom mount up to the huge figure of nearly £35,000,000, and of this the duties charged on goods landed at London alone account for nearly half. The reason for this is simple. London imports half the wines and spirits, a quarter of the tobacco, and nearly all the tea and coffee that are consumed in the United Kingdom, and these are the most important articles on which duty is charged. Liverpool, on the other hand, which is almost as great a port as London, does most of its import business in cotton, and that comes in free. It is in the **Long Room** of the Custom-house that most of the business is done. Thither come the captains of vessels that have anchored in the Thames to give a detailed report of the cargoes. If the goods are not subject to duty, the importer gets an 'entry' or permit to unload, and the merchandise is discharged at some one or other of the legal quays, sufferance wharves, or docks. But should the vessel bring a cargo of tea, spirits, or tobacco, either the duty must be paid, or else the goods go to be locked up in one of the **bonded warehouses.** These bonded warehouses are one of the main sources of our commercial prosperity. A merchant, who imported £10,000 worth of tea or tobacco, for example, might be quite unable to pay the duty on it at once. So the Government allows the goods to lie in one of the bonded warehouses, and the merchant need not pay the duty on them till they are sold to the consumer or to the retail dealer. Furthermore, should an importer wish to re-export a dutiable cargo, he simply lets it lie in a bonded warehouse till he is ready to send it away. The merchant, in this case, is saved the expense of having to pay out a considerable sum of money by way of duty (though, of course, he would get it back again when the goods were re-exported), and the officials of the Custom-house are saved an infinity of trouble.

Future needs of the Port.—For two hundred years and more London has been the greatest port in the world, and this position she has maintained not as the result of improvements in river-navigation, but rather in spite of the very little that has been done in that way of recent years to develop the trade of the port. It is true that trade is increasing, but the advance is comparatively slow. Hamburg, Antwerp, and Rotterdam each increased their tonnage over 175 per cent. during the years 1887-1907; London's increase in the same time was only some 40 per cent. Something must be allowed for the fact that the three foreign ports are late-comers in the race—a baby's growth is, in proportion, infinitely quicker than that of a man; but the fact remains that 'the famous burh of Lundunaborg' is not keeping pace with its rivals as it should do. It is not that the London

Docks are standing idle; on the contrary, most of them are working up to their utmost capacity; but there is no room in any one of them for another line of big steamers. Furthermore there is not one of them, wet or dry, which can accommodate either the largest battleships or the largest liners, or anything approaching them. Once the Thames could hold the largest vessels in the world: Alfred built ships to fight the Danish pirates, 'full twice as large as they, some with sixty oars, some with more'; and later on an old Icelandic history describes Cnut's ships as 'wondrously big: he himself had that dragon, which was so mickle that it told up sixty oar-benches.' We would like to see the largest vessels of our day berthed in the Thames again. But the modern ocean leviathans, 20,000 tons in burden, cannot enter the Thames at all, because the river is too shallow, and because there are no docks large enough to accommodate them. Between Gravesend and the Royal Albert Docks there is only a depth of water of from 24 feet to 16 feet, and above that point up to the Thames tunnel the depth falls as low as 13 feet. Therefore, if it is ever hoped to draw again to the Thames the world's largest vessels, there must be provided increased dockage and a depth of more than 30 feet from Gravesend as far as the West India Docks at all events. The deepening of the channel by dredging is possible, and new docks are possible; they will cost money, of course, but the money will be well spent if it will permanently secure to London its old-time supremacy over the ports of the world, and maintain it as a city, to which, in the words of old Fitzstephen, 'merchants of every nation under heaven delight to bring their trade by sea.'

DATE CHRONICLE OF LONDON

610	St. Paul's founded by Ethelbert, king of Kent. This was the first Christian Church in London.
1078-81	White Tower built by Bishop Gundulf of Rochester.
1097	Westminster Hall built by William Rufus. Part of this hall still remains.
1176	London Bridge begun. Peter of Colechurch the architect.
1285	First conduit, or water-cistern, erected in Cheapside. Water led in pipes from Tyburn brook.
1355	London first sends its members to Parliament.
1406	30,000 people die of the Plague. Whittington Lord Mayor of London.
1527	Moorfields drained.
1547	City of Westminster first represented in Parliament.
1567	Only fifty-eight Scotchmen found in the City this year. Now London contains more Scotchmen than Edinburgh itself.
1580	Elizabeth's proclamation forbidding the building of fresh houses within three miles of the City gates.

1582	London first supplied with Thames water from a force-pump on London Bridge.
1594	Globe (Shakespeare's) Theatre built in Southwark. The first London theatre was the 'Theatre' in Shoreditch, built 1570.
1620	New River water supplied to London.
1622	First newspaper published in London. This was the Weekly News. The London Weekly Courant appeared in the same year.
1635	Proclamation to put down the multitude of coaches about London and Westminster.
1657	Tea first sold at the Rainbow Coffee-house in Fleet Street.
1661	Maypole erected in the Strand.
1665	The Plague. 100,000 people died, being a fifth of the total population.
1666	The Fire. The City nearly all destroyed.
1670	Temple Bar built (removed in 1879).
1683-4	Thames frozen over. Fair held on it.
1699	Billingsgate made a free market for fish. Elizabeth proclaimed it 'an open place for the bringing in of any fish, corn, salt stores, victuals and fruit, and for no other merchandise.'
1705	Tottenham Court Road first paved.
1708	Bolton Street, Piccadilly, the most westerly street in London.
1710	General Post-office established.
1715	Maypole in the Strand taken down. Sir Isaac Newton obtained it and made it into a stand for the largest telescope in the world.

1722	Chelsea Waterworks started.
1729	Tyburn Road first called Oxford Street. Tyburn gallows, on the site of the present Connaught Place, stood at the head of Oxford Street.
1750	Westminster Bridge opened.
1757	Houses on London Bridge removed. A step rendered necessary by the increase in the wheeled traffic over the bridge.
1759	British Museum opened.
1760	Three City gates pulled down—Aldgate, Cripplegate, and Ludgate.
1780	Gordon riots.
1783	Last executions at Tyburn. One of them was for a forgery on the East India Company.
1801	First regular census of London. The population was 864,845.
	First canal, the Paddington, opened.
1807	Gas first used in London. Pall Mall and Bishopsgate Street first streets so lighted.
1820	Cabs first in use.
	Regent's Canal opened. The canal and park derive their name from the Prince-Regent, afterwards George IV.
1825	Zoological Gardens established.
1827	Hammersmith Suspension Bridge opened.
1830	Omnibuses first introduced.
1831	New London Bridge opened.
1834	Old Houses of Parliament burnt down. These were part of the old Royal Palace of Westminster.
1837	London University started.

1840	Penny Postage came into operation. Rowland Hill was the originator of the scheme.
1844	Fleet Prison taken down. The prison stood on the east side of Farringdon Street. Prisoners, who tried to escape, were put into a tub at the prison-gate and exposed to public shame.
1845	First penny steamboats on the Thames.
1851	First Great World's Exhibition held in Hyde Park in the Crystal Palace, since removed to Sydenham.
1861	Great fire in Tooley Street. The name Tooley Street is a corruption of St. Olaf's Street, and is a memorial of the Danish occupation of London.
1866	London Fire-brigade established.
1887	Jubilee procession of Queen Victoria.
1889	London, outside the City, first governed by the County Council. Lord Rosebery first Chairman.
1894	Tower Bridge opened.
1897	Diamond Jubilee procession of Queen Victoria.
1899	Parliament passes the London Government (Borough Councils) Act. The Boroughs, 28 in number, are made the rateing authorities for London.
1905	The new thoroughfares of Kingsway and Aldwych opened.
1906	The new bridge at Vauxhall opened.
1900-07	Era of tube railways and electric trams. 1900. (*a*) City and South London, and (*b*) Central London ('twopenny tube'). 1903. New system of L.C.C. electric tramways inaugurated. 1905. Electric trains from Baker Street to Harrow and Uxbridge. Metropolitan and District railways thereafter electrified. 1906. 'Bakerloo' tube from Edgware Road and Baker Street to Waterloo and Elephant and Castle. 1907. Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton tube. Hampstead tube (to Highgate and Golder's Green).

SOME DATES IN THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LONDON

1259	Henry III. grants special privileges to the Hanse Merchants of the Steelyard.
1327	Goldsmiths' Company incorporated.
	Fitzaylwin, first Mayor of London, was a member of the Goldsmiths' guild before it was made into a Company.
1477	First printing-press in England set up by Caxton at Westminster.
1551	The privileges of the Merchants of the Steelyard declared forfeited.
1555	Russian Company incorporated.
	London trades with North Russia and, through Russia, with Persia.
1557	Stationers' Company founded.
1571	Royal Exchange opened by Queen Elizabeth.
1600	East India Company started.
	The Company's rule ended in 1858, after the Indian Mutiny.
1650	Jews allowed to come back to London.
	They were expelled by Edward I. in 1290.
1669	Second Royal Exchange opened.
1685	French silk-weavers settle in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green.
1694	Bank of England incorporated.
	William Paterson, a Scotsman, the originator of the scheme.

1710	The South Sea Company instituted.
1726	Old East India House built.
1734	Bank of England first does business in Threadneedle Street. Business formerly carried on in the Grocers' Hall, in Poultry.
1797	Bank of England suspends cash payments.
1802-28	Opening of the Docks. West India, London, Commercial, and St. Katharine's.
1836	First London railway: Greenwich Railway opened from London terminus to Deptford.
1838-44	Early Railways:— (i) Paddington to Maidenhead (G. W. R.). (ii) London and Birmingham Railway. (iii) London to Southampton. (iv) London to Dover.
1843	Thames Tunnel opened for foot-passengers.
1849	Coal Exchange opened by Prince Albert.
1854	Working-men's College in Red Lion Square opened.
1855	Islington Cattle-market opened.
1861	First London tramway from the Marble Arch to Bayswater (since removed).
1863	Metropolitan Railway opened.
1869	Holborn Viaduct opened. This crosses the old valley of the Holborn or Fleet.
1884	Inner circle of Metropolitan Railway completed. The making of this line, together with the purchase of the land, cost from £600,000 to £1,000,000 per mile.
1886	Tilbury Docks opened.
1893	Shipping Exchange started in Billiter Street.

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